JOHN BULL AND HIS OTHER ISLAND.

ARTHUR BENNETT.

III—IV.

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BY

ARTHUR BENNETT.

"You do not understand the Irish," said O'Grady.

"Und'stand!" exclaimed Furlong; "I pwonounce the whole countwy quite incompwhensible!"

Handy Andy.

III.

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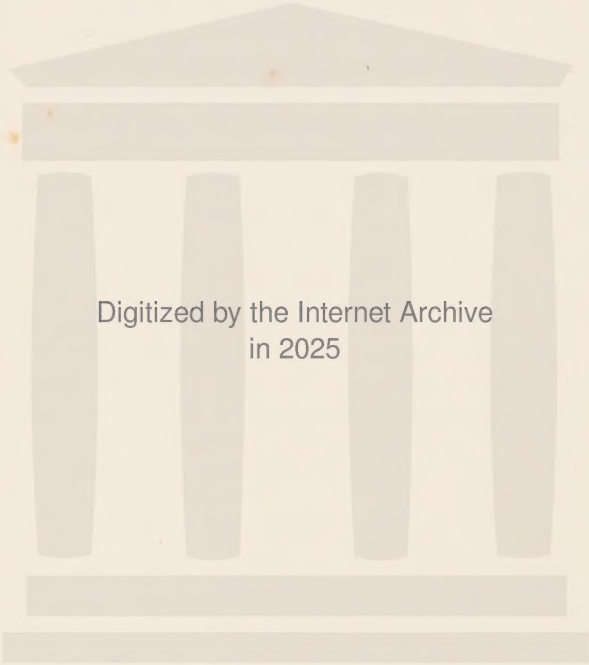
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JOHN BULL

AND

HIS OTHER ISLAND.

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CHAPTER I.

WE "CANNOT REST FROM TRAVEL"—A MEDICAL CYNIC—A DICTATOR WANTED — I BEARD THE BEARDED — THE LOYAL SAILORS—A DISMAL DAYBREAK—THE LIFFEY AGAIN.

At a little before seven o'clock on the morning of the 24th of August, 1887, I was aroused by the discordant blast of the steam-horn aboard the "Longford," which was answered by a still more discordant blast from another horn ; and, rising hastily, I went on deck, and found that a dense fog was hanging over land and sea, and a drizzling rain descending ; that we were just entering Dublin Bay and sailing past the Hill of Howth ; and that it was from the Bailey Light-house that the answering sound proceeded. Once

again Mr. Richardson and I were in sight of John Bull's Other Island; and once again, with open eyes and ears, and bags and rugs and macintoshes, we had come to wonder at its loveliness, and to ponder the problem of its fate.

Our destination on this, the last of our three journeys, was the Rebel South. We had left Liverpool at about seven o'clock on the previous evening. The night was calm, the sky clear, the moon nearly full. No foaming billows broke upon the ship to rob the landsmen of their appetites, and send them down below, and make them feel as if, upon the whole, they would rather like to die. They trod the deck, and watched the lights along the coast of Wales, and chatted pleasantly; and everybody seemed to be of opinion that, whatever might be thought of Ireland, there were worse places than the deck of one of the steamers of the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company. The forecastle was crowded with harvestmen on their way back to their rude little hovels in the Wilds of the West, and they sat, or lolled, or stood about the ship in a variety of picturesque attitudes, smoking, talking, listening, eating or sleeping, in accordance with their respective moods. We were standing near a group of them, conversing with a Dublin doctor, a cynic who said that he

did not take any interest in politics, as they were merely a trifle, and a very dishonest one; that there were scarcely any politicians of real integrity in the United Kingdom, but that he included Mr. Bright among the number; that he had never, in his life, been to a political meeting, and did not intend to go; that, personally, he did not concern himself at all about the Irish question, not caring very much how matters went, and thinking, in the present state of the country, that a still tongue made a wise head. But he added that it was quite a mistake to imagine that all the people in Ireland were Nationalists; that, on the contrary, many, in fact, he might say the whole of the better classes, were either Conservatives or Liberal Unionists; that the inhabitants of Ulster were, beyond question, a superior race to the inhabitants of the remaining provinces; that they would certainly fight if Home Rule were granted, and, if they did, would thrash the three without the slightest difficulty; that Ireland could never, owing to the peculiarities of the national temperament, be satisfactorily governed except by a dictator; and he parenthetically referred to the fact that the whole of the Nationalist members were under the finger and thumb of Mr. Parnell

and that he was himself a dictator in deed, if not in name ; and said that, if Lord Dufferin, himself an Irishman, could only be sent out, with absolute power to govern Ireland as he thought best, and with freedom to follow a firm and consistent policy, the Irish difficulty would be settled in the course of a few months. Speaking of the land question, this medical cynic informed me that he had himself been travelling on a car with a landlord friend, and seen a man leap from behind a wall, glance cautiously up and down the road, and, observing that there was not anyone to report the act, approach and pay his rent ; and that, next morning, the same fellow had appeared at the agent's office with the rest of the tenants, apparently as defiant and determined to withhold his dues as any of them, hoping thus to escape their suspicions and the vengeance which might have been expected had his honesty been discovered. The Proclamation of the League, however, which had taken place five days before we started, my informant considered a mistake.

In the midst of our chat, I observed that something was transpiring among a group of harvestmen to our left ; and, turning towards them, I discovered an excitable individual with a short black beard, who hailed, it seemed, from Ballina,

denouncing the Government in unmeasured terms on account of this Proclamation, and gloating over the great meeting which had been held, on the previous evening, in the Rotunda—a meeting at which English members of Parliament had, for the first time, attended, in order to shew their sympathy with Irish disaffection, and to seek across the Channel for the notoriety which the good sense of their countrymen denied to them at home. Some ten or a dozen gaping Hibernians were listening to the oracle with apparent approval when one of the number interrupted him, and declared that the meeting was all nonsense, and that its promoters were only stirring up lawlessness and bringing fresh trouble upon the country.

"Phat's that ye say?" suddenly ejaculated the black-bearded gentleman.

The interrupter repeated his assertion, but in a mumbling tone which proved that, however logical his ideas might have been, he lacked the power to defend them intelligibly; and murmurs of disapproval were heard.

"Sure, ye'd bether hould your tongue," continued his interlocutor, "for ye don't know phat ye're talking about!"

Now, as I admired the man's boldness in giving

expression to opinions which were evidently unpopular, this summary method of silencing him was decidedly unpalatable to me ; and so I here ventured to express my entire agreement with what he had said. Had a thunderbolt fallen among the company they could scarcely have been more astonished. Before they had recovered from the shock which it appeared to give them to learn that there were two sides to the question, I had plunged *in medias res*, and was doing my best to show them that none of the English members who had attended the meeting were personages of importance, except in their own eyes ; and that, whilst the policy of proclaiming the League might be open to dispute, the Proclamation would only affect the lawless ; and that honest and peaceable citizens would not have anything whatever to fear from it. They listened to me with the greatest politeness, and occasionally an expression of agreement would reach my ears, or someone would interpose a contradiction ; but my interrupters were quickly silenced, either by the bearded one, who would tell them all alike, with amazing impartiality, "Sure, ye know nothing at all," or else by the remainder of the audience, who would enjoin the objectors to "lit him"—the authority from Ballina

—"talk to the gintleman, for didn't *he* know all aboot it?"

I told them that, although I was not, in principle, opposed to Home Rule, if purely municipal in its functions, I was utterly opposed to the scheme of Mr. Gladstone, and thought that it was not just either to Ireland or Great Britain; and that, to me, the only form of Home Rule which seemed in any way feasible was the federal form, which would involve the creation of separate legislatures for England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales—I was going to add, with strictly limited powers, and subject to the absolute supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, when one of the sailors who had joined the group, which, by this time, had attained considerable dimensions, suddenly exclaimed, with much emphasis: "Well, then, I don't agree with you at all, for you would split the Empire up entirely if you granted that!" and, before I could explain, he had disappeared down the steerage steps.

This incident gave my loquacious Nationalist friend a rare opportunity; and he pitilessly ridiculed the vanished sailor, and kept reverting to him at intervals, and making the kindest enquiries concerning the health and general condition of "the man who didn't want to break up the Empire,"

adding that he reminded him of a butcher, "aboot twice the width ow the funnel," with whom he had travelled, in the morning, from Yorkshire, and whom he had informed that he was journeying to "the Island of Saints." On hearing this, the gentleman who was twice the width of the funnel proceeded to declare that Mr. Parnell and his followers were a set of sedition-mongers, and wanted hanging; and, when our friend alluded to the fact that they were supported by Mr. Gladstone, exclaimed that Mr. Gladstone was just as bad. From his own account, he made matters rather lively for the butcher, asking him, among other things, "whether, wid all his knowledge, he had ever read." His wrath against him was unbounded, and he repeatedly referred to his resemblance to the funnel, as if that, of itself, were sufficient to put him outside the pale of civilization, and quite unfit him for arguing with an enlightened Irish Nationalist; and I did not appease him by telling him that it would not be fair to judge Englishmen by the outspoken butcher any more than it would be fair to judge Irishmen by men of the stamp of Mr. Dillon or Dr. Tanner. This led to a long discussion concerning those gentlemen; but I quite failed to convince him that it was just such extremists as these, honest and patriotic as their intentions

might be, who excited distrust and apprehension in the British mind, and made John Bull so reluctant to surrender the control of his Other Island into the hands of Irishmen. I next asked him whether, assuming Mr. Gladstone's Bills had passed, the people of Ireland would really have been prepared to accept them as a full and final settlement of the difficulty; and he admitted that they would have required amending, but added that the Oppressed would never separate from their Oppressors because of the necessity of their protection against external enemies.

"Is it fair, then," I continued, "that Ireland, whilst theoretically united to Great Britain, and compelled to contribute several millions a year to the imperial exchequer, should be shut out from the Imperial Parliament, and debarred from her share in the government of that Empire which her wisdom and her valour have done so much to create?" and, as I proceeded, I heard sounds of approval from several of the harvestmen around me.

But he rejoined that he did not think Mr. Gladstone had proposed anything of the sort.

I tried to make it clear that, although he had

since hinted that he was willing to leave the question open, this was certainly a part of the original scheme, a scheme which Mr. Parnell, in the name of the Irish nation, had undertaken to accept ; and I was surprised and pleased to hear several voices corroborating my assertion. I now pressed him as to the annual tribute itself, and elicited the remark that he did not see why a poor country like Ireland should be called upon to pay anything to the imperial revenue, although she expected to benefit from our protection. I also asked him what he thought about giving the Irish landlords twenty years' purchase of the original judicial rental for their property, which was likewise a portion of Mr. Gladstone's sagacious plan ; and he said that from seven to ten years' purchase was ample. Next I enquired whether he expected to obtain such legislation as he deemed necessary to meet the wants of the peasantry from a chamber which contained a First Order composed of peers, landlords and plutocrats ; and, as the net result of my queries, I found that the principal conditions which Mr. Parnell and his party had, in the name of the people of Ireland, agreed to accept as a final settlement, he, as one of them, altogether repudiated. When I asked what he

thought of Mr. Gladstone's suggestion that Ulster might be treated separately, and whether she would have fought in the event of the passing of the Bill, he answered that the idea of excluding that province from its operation would not hold water for a moment ; and that, if Ulster ventured to object to any scheme of Home Rule to which the majority of the Irish representatives might assent, they would drive the Ulstermen, whom he characterised as foreign intruders, "into the say." As an example of his opinion of the Loyal North, I may mention that he asserted that "ye might as well go to the divil for jushtice as to a Belfasht magistrate."

This conversation lasted a long time, and I was exceedingly gratified to notice that many of the points which I advanced were quite new to these humble harvesters ; and that the facts of the case only needed stating to show them that the Bill for the Better Government of Ireland was a pitiable blunder. Before the discussion was over we were off the coast of Anglesea. Our audience had gradually decreased, and only two or three remained when, at last, we parted for the night. Before retiring, however, I had a chat with one of the sailors—an

Irishman—while the lights of Holyhead were flashing on our lee. He told me that the Queen had not a more loyal subject than himself; but, in spite of his loyalty, he felt strongly in reference to many of the features of the present government of Ireland, and was especially bitter against "landlord oppression;" and he declared that he was in favour of Home Rule, subject to the control of the Imperial Parliament.

Such were some of the incidents which enlivened our evening sail along the coast of Cheshire, and Flint, and Denbigh, and Carnarvon, and Anglesea, with the silver moon above us, and the foaming sea around, and the dim land beyond, and, here and there, the lights upon the ships and rocks we passed; and now, as we sailed under the shadow of the Hill of Howth, and by the Bailey Lighthouse, with its howling horn, and then past the Poolbeg, where yet another horn was making morning hideous with its intermittent din, and saw the Pigeon House Fort again, and resumed in the fogs of the early day, our acquaintance with the places which, three years before, we had seen amid the darkness of the night, I stood conversing with a young Irish gentleman, and asked him whether he thought it the wrong thing to have proclaimed the League. He

replied that it was "very much the right thing, if only the Proclamation were properly carried out." Like the doctor, he was of opinion that, if Home Rule were granted, the people of the North would rise and simply "smash the rest of Ireland"—so he graphically expressed it—unless Mr. Gladstone, as a crowning favour to the loyal, should send over an English army to "smash" them, a contingency which he appeared to regard as almost inevitable, notwithstanding Mr. Gladstone's passionate hatred of coercion, except when practised by himself, or employed by the enemies of England against her friends.

The rain and fog diminished as we were talking, and, by the time we reached the basin which opens from the river in the direction of Clontarf, and got amid the shipping, and the steamers moored on either side the stream, and passed the Custom House, and saw the bridges ahead, and the towers, and spires, and wharves, and warehouses, and streets, and shops, and public buildings, the sun began to peer from behind the clouds in a manner which gave promise of a fine day.

CHAPTER II.

THE RIDE TO RATHDRUM—THE DRIVE TO GLENDALOUGH — IDEAL LANDLORDS—ANECDOTE OF THE LATE EARL OF LEITRIM—PAT BARRATT—THE RUINED CITY, AND THE SEVEN CHURCHES —A COUPLE OF RASCALS—ST. KEVIN'S LATHER BOX—KING O'TOOLE'S PUNCH BOWL — MR. RICHARDSON HAS A NARROW ESCAPE — ST. KEVIN'S BED — WHY THERE ARE NOT ANY LARKS AT GLENDALOUGH — ANECDOTES OF SIR WALTER SCOTT, MR. T. P. O'CONNOR AND MR. DAVITT.

The first item in our programme was a visit to County Wicklow. Accordingly, as soon as the "Longford" drew up beside the quay, we hastened ashore, and, crossing the river, made for the Harcourt Street Station. The way led us through Stephen's Green, the largest square in Dublin. It is nearly twenty acres in area, is adorned with trees and gardens, and has a statue of the late Earl of Eglinton on the north side, and an equestrian statue of George the Second in the

centre. Around it lie the Royal College of Surgeons, the Catholic University, the Museum of Irish Industry and other fine buildings; and the entire neighbourhood is occupied by public institutions and the mansions of the great.

At eight we left for Rathdrum. Gliding by some beautiful suburban residences, and on through spreading fields and rustling branches, we passed Killiney Hill, where the sweetest of villas clustered in the pleasantest of situations, and saw the Sugar Loaves, the sister cones whose Irish name is said to signify "the gilt spears," because upon their lofty points the sunlight lingers when the world below is growing dark. A glimpse of Bray, and then we rode beneath the Head, and on along the very brink of the sea; until, through Delgany, from whence the Devil's Glen is visited, and then Kilcoole, at which, in 1798, a force of rebels was defeated, we came to Wicklow. This ancient town is the capital of the county, and derives its name from its situation at the extremity of the estuary of the Vartry, which is separated from the sea by the low and sandy peninsula known as the Murragh, where, to-day, a number of soldiers were grouped in picturesque encampment. The town, though pretty, is of small importance; and, beyond,

the line, which terminates at Wexford, runs inland, having followed the yellow sands and the curling waters all the way from Bray.

But Rathdrum was our destination, and, dismounting there, we entered the hotel which adjoins the station, and made it our first business to look after some breakfast. In the meantime, a car was secured by an intelligent waiter to convey us to the Seven Churches, and, afterwards, through Avondale, the residence of Mr. Parnell, to the famous Vale of Avoca. Passing through the village, a portion of which nestled in a deep hollow to the right, and the main street of which reminded me of Letterkenny, we drove some miles along the Vale of Clara, a wide valley in whose green recesses flowed the river Avonmore, completely hidden, save at intervals, by thick plantations rich with sombre firs and pines, and giant oaks, and silvery birches, and the graceful mountain ash, the latter ablaze with yellow berries, like vegetable candelabra kindled for some mighty wood-god's festival. And in the gloomy forest halls they lighted there was laid a velvet carpet, interspersed with flowers; and through the branches here and there the mellow sunlight stole; and everywhere the hawthorn boughs were drooping with the

ruddy food the robin loves ; and along our path luxuriant briars held their prickly arms aloft to offer us amazing clusters of delicious blackberries, that shone like emeralds, or glowed like rubies, or glistened like black diamonds. Between the woods were many fertile fields, and, in their midst, such farms and houses as disposed us both to doubt if this were verily a land that groaned beneath the oppressor's yoke ; for they were large and substantial, and singularly pleasing in appearance, with their white walls, and their roofs of red tile, and their genuine chimneys, and their real windows, and their doors that actually kept the cold out ; in fact, they were farms which many an Englishman might envy ; and all this, we heard, was owing to the wisdom of the Earl of Meath, who did not abuse the privileges, and was mindful of the duties of a landlord, and who owned an estate which was kept in better order than any we had seen in Ireland. Our driver gave him a very high character, and told us, amongst other things, that he offered prizes to his tenantry to encourage them to take a pride in their homesteads ; and endeavoured, by every means in his power, to assist them to make the property a credit both to him and to themselves. But he gave us a

curious illustration of the spirit which prevails among the population. He pointed out to us, quite close to the road, a comfortable house in which there lived an old woman who had formerly occupied a wretched tenement of the usual type; and who, on having the existing premises erected for her use in place of it, querulously wanted to know "pwhy the landlord must be afther disthurbing her in this manner!" We also rode through a portion of the estate of Earl Fitzwilliam, and here likewise the land was well cultivated, and the farmers apparently prosperous.

As we were chatting with the driver concerning the soil and its owners, he told us how, a short time before the murder of the late Earl of Leitrim, he had driven him to Glendalough; and how the Earl had scrutinized every bush and wall and tree, as if he dreaded to discover some assassin lurking behind it, eager for his blood; how he carried a revolver in his pocket, and, when he arrived at the hotel at Glendalough, he passed inside, but, in a few moments, came to the door, put his hands in his pockets, and gazed vacantly at the peaceful hills surrounding him, repeating the action twice, and then calling him and exclaiming: "This is a quiet place you've brought me to, driver! I don't think I'll stay here! Drive me

back again!" apparently imagining that murderers were dogging his footsteps even here, and that only in the life and bustle of the town, and among his own friends, was he safe against the doom that was so speedily to fall upon him in the shadow of the woods of Donegal.

We had passed through the Vale of Clara now, and were riding through the Vale of Laragh, which matches it in loveliness of hills and trees and rippling waters; and, emerging from the latter, we rode through the village of the same name, with its church, and school, and police barracks, and the vacant cottages of the men who had formerly been employed in a lead mine up a valley to the right of Glendalough. This mine, the driver said, had been abandoned because of the lowness of prices, and the difficulty of transit.

Beyond the village, the Priory of St. Saviour, the first of the Seven Churches which have made the fame of Glendalough, was pointed out to us across the stream which ran to our left from the two lakes which nestled in the bosom of the gloomy valley which we were about to visit, and which was just ahead; and, a little further, we saw, beside the road, the Trinity Church, the second of the seven; and, further yet, a crowd of ruins in the rear of an hotel; and here we left the car.

Straightway we were pounced upon by a short, broad-shouldered, well-built and active individual in knickerbockers, with a dark moustache, who promptly introduced himself as Pat Barratt, "known to all the celebrities of the day, and mentioned in a score of guide books"; and who, from the moment we met him until the moment we left him, kept up a string of legends, and witticisms, and rhymes, and philosophical reflections on things in general with all the fluency of a genius, and whose capacity for alternately amusing, instructing and deluding the astonished traveller I have never seen excelled.

"What is your charge?" we enquired.

"Phatever yer honour likes to give," said he—an artful way of answering you which is very common in Ireland, and which usually draws from the generous tourist a fee about double that which any guide with any sense of shame would ever venture to ask. Following this worthy, we found ourselves, in another moment, among the ruins of the city which St. Kevin is said to have founded, and prepared to examine the Seven Churches which are commonly attributed to him. The facts, however, are disputed, some maintaining that he merely lived as a hermit here, having charge of

an abbey which he established ; and that the city was founded by Dymnach, "one of the lords of the surrounding territory," or by St. Mocorog, a Briton who, fired by the fame of St. Kevin, crossed the Channel, and took up his abode in a cell on the eastern side of the valley, erecting a seminary within the walls of which arose a band of men renowned for religion and the love of learning, and who spread abroad in "the Island of Saints" that knowledge and piety which have made its earlier history a record of peaceful industry and beautiful devotion, and have flung a halo round it in the age when round the neighbouring realms the heavy darkness hung for centuries. But strange disasters came upon the holy city. Ravaged twice by fire and once by water, a few scattered ruins alone remain to attest its former greatness.

Our talkative conductor first directed our attention to the Cathedral Church, of which a considerable portion remained, the whole of the ruins, which were for a long time neglected, having been carefully restored some time ago. But none of the churches was anything like complete, and the next we saw—St. Kevin's Kitchen—was the only one which had a roof. Within the walls of the Cathedral were the tombs of two old abbots ;

and, in the burial ground outside, were many other ancient tombs and crosses. It is popularly believed that this resting-place is so peculiarly hallowed that "the body which is buried here is sure to rise again with its spiritual companion in happiness"; and one of the crosses was pointed out to us as St. Kevin's Monument, and reported to stand upon the spot where the saint had expressed a desire to be buried. The rising generation, however, will probably be more interested in knowing that the man who will encircle this cross with his arms may expect to encircle the waist and win the heart of the girl he loves in a strictly limited period.

The Oratory, or St. Kevin's Church, or Kitchen, as it is usually called, on account of the Round Tower — said to be the smallest in Ireland — which forms a part of it, and is supposed to resemble a chimney, is the oldest instance in the country of a church with a circular belfry. At the door of the Kitchen, a second and very unnecessary guide was waiting to admit us and call our attention to a number of crosses, and broken ornaments, and fragments of tombstones, including that of St. Kevin, if his assertions were to be credited, and a curious stone head and face which had been brought from

the Church of the Desert. His superfluous and foggy explanations over, this worthy informed us, with an air of great generosity that we might take a bit of loose mortar from the wall, and that it was harder than the stone itself. I gave him sixpence, and he looked as if he had expected six shillings. Three other fellows had been strolling about as we approached, and, on Mr. Barratt's enquiry whether these "gintlemin" had been inside, "Sure," he exclaimed, "thim are no gintlemin at all!" presumably because they had thought it desirable to dispense with his services, and as a warning to us to submit to be fleeced as the price of being flattered.

To the right of the Kitchen, and a little beyond the Cathedral, was a Round Tower, 110 feet in height and 51 in circumference, larger than the one we had seen at Antrim, but not so perfect, and, like it, reputed to be the finest in the country. They all are. The theory as to their origin which we had been inclined to favour was promptly brushed aside by Mr. Barratt, who declared that they had each been built to commemorate some great battle. It is, I believe, a fact that the great majority occupy sites which are said to be historical; but whether they were merely monuments, or had served

some deeper purpose, is a question which I must leave to Mr. Barratt and the antiquaries. Further to the right, was Our Lady's Chapel, which some assert to have been the Cill Iffin, or Convent of St. Iffin, referred to in the Irish Life of St. Kevin.

We now crossed the stream already mentioned, and found ourselves opposite a small inn, where a disreputable-looking old fiddler, with gray locks and an artificial smile, and an even more disreputable-looking piper, were producing disreputable music in a dingy boarded room; and, as I stood gazing at them through the open door, they increased their efforts, a fine, brawny young fellow in knickerbockers, like the guide, and with a gun beside him, who was, I found, a gamekeeper, sitting on the table watching them, with an amused twinkle in his dark eyes. I enquired if they would oblige us with a jig.

"Go along wid yez," said the old fiddler to his companion. "Let ye dance for the gintlemin!"

"Go along; shtep out like a man!" said the gamekeeper.

I emphasized my request, and once again the fiddler added his exhortations; but the piper

only leered stupidly at the floor, and persisted in declaring his incapacity ; and, instead of dancing, as we wished him, he drew forth fresh discords from the melancholy instrument so dear to the hearts of the children of "the Land o' Cakes." However, the gamekeeper good-naturedly came to the rescue ; and, the musicians striking up as lively an air as they were equal to, their legs moving in time to the music, he strode into the middle of the room and danced the national dance with all the spirit imaginable. And well he looked with his bronzed and open countenance, and broad shoulders, and splendid calves, as he threw his limbs about, and brought his feet down with a stamp—a perfect picture of a fine young Irishman. I thanked him heartily, and asked him what he would have to drink ; and, as I was passing out, handed sixpence to the old rogue with the fiddle, and was wishing him good-day when he enquired whether that were all I was going to give them.

"To be sure it is!" said I.

"Aren't ye going to give thish man wan?" said he.

"No, certainly not ; you must divide it!"

"Oh! well, thin, ye'd betther take it back!" he snarled. "Ye may require it on your journey!"

However, he was cute enough to pocket it, and, as I left the room, I heard him muttering a series of disconnected curses. The very faces of the two musicians proved them to be a couple of arrant rascals; and we were afterwards informed that the piper was really a capital dancer, and had refused to display his powers simply because he was too drunk to trust himself upon his legs; that this was his normal condition; and Pat Barratt completed the catalogue of his misdemeanours by solemnly informing us that he was "breaking the heart of his ould mother" by his riotous living.

He next conducted us up a slight ascent behind the inn to Fin M'Coul's Lather Box, a deep, rocky basin, filled with most translucent water, which flowed from the hills above through a similar, but smaller basin, known as King O'Toole's Punch Bowl. In the Lather Box, two persons had been drowned whilst bathing. The was full of trout, which rose voraciously to the surface, as we flung a few bits of biscuit upon it. The place was wonderfully adapted for fishing, the rocky banks above the basin completely concealing the angler from view, though, if the faintest shadow touched the water, so pure it was that instantly the timid fish would

dart away. Into the Punch Bowl the best of all the drinks beneath the sun flowed foaming down a narrow crevice in the rocks; and, as we descended in order to view the musical cascade more easily, Mr. Richardson suddenly fell, for the sward was wet and smooth and slippery since the rain. I turned abruptly, for, by this time, I had reached a level platform near the Bowl, and was startled to see him sliding down the rocks right in the direction of the water, which glistened many feet below; but, in an instant, our ubiquitous companion had caught him by the foot, arrested his downward course, and saved him from a serious accident.

Walking through a pleasant grove, we paused to glance at the ruins of the Rhefeart Church. Beyond it, we were waylaid by an apple-woman, selling a poor article at a heavy price; and, having paid the usual tribute, we made for the Upper Lake. This was considerably larger than the Lower Lake, which we had passed in the course of our ramble; and upon it several boats were in waiting to convey the inquisitive tourist to St. Kevin's Bed. The fares the boatmen asked were extravagant in the extreme, and they lied most brazenly in reference to the distance; but, as we were anxious to see that celebrated spot,

and did not know how to get there in any other way we were compelled to submit to their exactions, and took our seats. A few strokes of the oars brought us to a craggy landing-place to the left of the lake; and here, high amid the rocks, we descried another impostor stationed at the entrance to the cave which was the object of our visit, in readiness to levy further toll as the condition of admitting us to the charmed recess. We sprang ashore, and proceeded to follow the directions of Pat Barratt, and clamber, with his assistance, up some very steep and awkward rocks to a sort of platform. Here the individual above mentioned met us and proffered his assistance, showing us where to put our hands, whilst Pat was occupied in performing a similar service for our feet, having to actually hold them in his own firm grasp, at times, so precarious was the ascent, and so few the crevices. Thus we gradually scrambled, one at a time, to a height of twenty feet above the lake, and, turning a sharp corner, where a false step would infallibly have plunged us into it, we slowly crawled into a small hollow in the rocks, just large enough to admit the two in a crouching position, with an excavated ledge for a pillow, and a number of celebrated names upon the walls, the

deep and gloomy waters frowning right below.

Such was the rude little chamber to which St. Kevin fled from the beautiful Kathleen, who is said to have been so madly in love with him that she begged to be permitted merely "to look upon his shadow, to hear not even his voice, but its ech;o" and undertook "to lie like a dog at his feet, take penance for his sins as well as her own, and, even in prayer, forget her own soul for the good of his." But St. Kevin didn't see it, and fled to escape her unpalatable attentions. However, as Moore expressed it :

> "East or west, where'er he turned,
> Still her eyes before him burned,"

until, at last, after surmounting many obstacles, he reached the cave, so difficult and even dangerous of access. And now he flattered himself that he had at last escaped those "eyes of most unholy blue," and might pursue his duties undisturbed. Judge, then, of his surprise and dismay when, awaking in the morning, he was greeted by the selfsame eyes, that gazed upon him through a mist of tears, and realized that Kathleen had succeeded in treading the track which had almost daunted him, and, in the frenzy of her love, seemed strong

enough to follow him even to the ends of the world. The reader will be sorry to hear that, utterly weary of the young lady's attentions, at the sudden sight of her, the saintly man started sternly from his craggy bed, and hurled her into the lake.

One could have forgiven him for fleeing from the infatuated maiden, even if he had doubted his good taste; but when we remember that he executed this summary vengeance upon her simply because she loved "not wisely, but too well," it is difficult to avoid a feeling of indignation, and of thankfulness on learning that he was afterwards afflicted with remorse; that, all "too late," he "felt her love, and mourned her fate;" and that he was doomed, as a punishment, to be haunted by her gentle ghost; though I must admit that it was very bad form upon the part of the young lady to persist in bothering the good man in this way. Since the date of the tragedy, said the guide, not a single person had been drowned in the lake—in fact, drowning was impossible in its sacred waters.

There are many other curious stories of St. Kevin, one of which is that when the Seven Churches were being built, the builders swore to begin their labours "with the lark," and to "lie down with the lamb;" but the larks were up so early

that they had to rise long before their weary bodies were refreshed; and to such an extent did their protracted toiling tell upon them that many died from its effects. The circumstances so moved the heart of St. Kevin that he prayed that no lark might ever sing above the lakes again, a prayer which is said to have been granted; for the music of the little pilgrim of the clouds is never heard at Glendalough — a fact, however, which common sense attributes, not to the intercession of St. Kevin, but to the fact that the lark loves green meadows and golden cornfields, and shuns the solitude and barrenness of rocky mountain valleys such as this.

We learnt that, in spite of the difficulty of entering the Bed, many ladies persisted in being pushed and hauled and lifted into it at any cost, for it is reputed to possess certain virtues which ladies are apt to value; and our guide told us an amusing story of a sort of female Tichborne whom nothing could persuade to leave the vicinity until she had performed the feat. With much trouble, and almost superhuman exertions on the part of her conductors, she at last succeeded. Lockhart touchingly describes the pain with which he saw Sir Walter Scott, in his declining years, and in defiance of all remonstrances, crawling along the

precipice, and finally managing to reach the cave in safety; and he adds an anecdote to the effect that, after Sir Walter departed, Lord Plunkett, the Attorney-General, informed the female guide who had attended them that he was a poet. "Poet!" said she; "the devil a bit of him, but an honourable gentleman—he gave me half-a-crown." It appears that St. Kevin's Bed has hidden the outlaw as well as the saint; for, in 1798, a number of the followers of one, Dwyer, were scattered over Wicklow, seeking shelter wherever it was attainable; and Dwyer himself, pursued by a body of Highlanders, took refuge here, and, fatigued with his wanderings, fell into a deep slumber. But the Highlanders tracked him to the very mouth of the cave. Awaking, he beheld them, and, in a moment, leapt into the lake, and, swimming to the further shore, escaped again.

Just beyond St. Kevin's Bed is the last of the Seven Churches, Temple-na-Skilligh — the Church of the Desert—which lies near the Upper Lake, on the side of Lugduff, a dark mountain of which we had a splendid view as, Mr. Richardson and I taking the oars, we rowed across this beautiful expanse of water a mile in length, shut in on three sides by wild and lofty rocks—Lugduff and Mullicap and Derry-

bawn upon the south, and, on the north, the heights of Comaderry, Glendassan and Brockagh, which fling eternal shadow over it ; while, from the midst of them, the Gleneolo flows, and, filling it, brims over and rolls onward to the Lower Lake, and, thence proceeding merrily, commingles with the Glendassan to form the lovely Avonmore, and glide, delighted, to the Meeting of the Waters.

During the whole of our ramble, Pat Barratt had amused us by a ceaseless fund of ancient legends, and modern anecdotes, and humourous rejoinders, and sage reflections ; and there was scarce a spot we visited of which he was not able to relate something that was interesting. On our way to the Upper Lake, we noticed some woods and houses opposite; and he informed us that, a little time previously, he had accompanied Mr. T. P. O'Connor over the ruins; and, as they were sitting together near a rock which he indicated, Mr. O'Connor had enquired what rent the tenants of these houses were paying. He told him.

"And is not that a reason for the agitation ?" said Mr. O'Connor. "Isn't it our duty to save the people from such laws as that ?"

"But how can the rents be unjust when every tenant has the right to have them fixed by the

Land Courts; and not only so, but, under the new Act, has acquired the privilege of having them revised in accordance with the fall in prices?" I objected.

"Ah!" said Mr. Barratt, "the Commissioners are influenced by the landlords, and they don't give sufficient reductions at all, at all!"

Among his latest visitors had been the Marquess of Londonderry, of whom he spoke highly; but the anecdote which amused us the most, though, of course, I cannot vouch for its correctness, for, like other geniuses, Mr. Barratt appeared to have a vivid imagination, was in reference to a visit by Mr. Davitt. On this occasion, Pat was decorated with a red scarf, and had a red rose in his hat, the gift of an English gentleman to whom he had shown the Churches. Mr. Davitt noticed them at once, and abruptly exclaimed:

"And are ye a Frenchman or a Chinaman that ye wear the likes o' that?"

But our friend had his reply ready.

"Sure, I wear thim for the sake of him that gave thim me," he said, "and, if ye'll give me inything betther, it's mysilf will be glad to wear that!"

As to the agitation, Mr. Barratt denounced it warmly, and told us that it had "ruined that part of the counthry intoirely;" that, prior to its

commencement, more people had visited Glendalough in the moonshine than now in the sunshine; and that the district formerly derived cart-loads of gold from the influx of tourists, where now it had to be content with pockets full.

Landing on the other side the lake, we came across the gamekeeper who had danced for us again. He was vastly amused at the spicy yarns which Pat was spinning, and remarked that he had seen many smart fellows in his time, but had never met *his* equal before; and he evidently attributed to us a considerable amount of credulity, for he was very much tickled at the attention with which we listened, not knowing that we had long ago adopted the plan of discounting the greater part of what we heard, in the more frequented parts of Ireland, by fully ninety per cent, instead of openly avowing our lack of faith, and thus depriving ourselves of a continuous source of entertainment.

At the top of one of the mountains here, there was, said Pat, a lake which was haunted by five hundred fairies, who were often seen to dance and revel on its silent shores by solitary wanderers; and, in the mountains just across the stream, he pointed out a deep gash which was attributed to the

mighty sword of Fin M'Coul. He also told us, as we passed the Lower Lake again, that into it St. Patrick had driven the last of the reptiles that had haunted Ireland, an honour which we have already seen to be disputed by Clew Bay and by one of the lakes in the Gap of Dunloe. However, the crawling things which he abominated appear to have formerly been viewed with superstitious reverence; and Dracolatria, or serpent-worship, is said to have flourished in the Valley of the Two Loughs for ages.

CHAPTER III.

THE HUT BESIDE THE ROAD—A PROTESTANT'S OPINION OF THE PROTESTANT HOME RULE ASSOCIATION—THE DRIVER ON THE VICEROY—A WORD TO UNIONISTS — THE HERMIT OF AVONDALE—ANECDOTE OF MR. GLADSTONE—THE MEETING OF THE WATERS—MR. RICHARDSON HAS ANOTHER MISHAP—A TWILIGHT VALLEY—BACK TO BRAY.

We parted from Mr. Barratt the best of friends, and, his benedictions (which were paid for) ringing in our ears, we at once proceeded to look after the car, and continue our journey, for we had still many miles to go. In a few minutes we had started, but paused at the Trinity, or Ivy Church, which is said to have been the cell of St. Mocorog, and close to which is the stump of a Round Tower. Having glanced at these, we scrambled over hedges, and banks, and deepditches, and forded the river in order to have a peep at the pretty ruins of the Priory of St. Saviour, in which St. Kevin is supposed to have been buried in 618; and where the dust of the O'Toole's, the old kings

of Wicklow, reposes. And, further still, we stopped again to enter a wretched hovel by the road. As I have already hinted, the great majority of the houses in Wicklow are of a much superior order to those to which we had been accustomed in other parts of Ireland, and many of them were really very substantial and tasteful structures; but, between Glendalough and the village of Laragh, we saw several of the now familiar style, thatched and windowless and wretched; and this was one of the worst. An old and dirty man, with elfish gray locks, and skin which, in spite of the power of advertising, did not appear to know the virtues of soap, bade us welcome to the hut to which it seemed a profanation to attach the name of home; and, as we entered, a smell so foul pervaded it that we wondered how it was possible for any human being to breathe such an atmosphere for any length of time and live. The floor was earthen, and the door divided, like the doors in Donegal; and the usual ashes glowed upon the bare hearth beneath the open chimney. The place was hardly three yards square, and a large portion of it was occupied by a rude bed of dry ferns in the corner beyond the fire. This and some clumsy boxes at its foot, and, filling the remaining space at that end of the apartment, a box which I took

to be the owner's wardrobe, but in which I found, on enquiry, that some hens were sitting, together with a few primitive utensils, was all the furniture, with the exception of a low stool beside the bed, on which was a plate containing a piece of salmon and some potatoes.

"There is a good deal of fish in this neighbourhood, I suppose?" said I. "Do you often dine on it?"

"No, mashter," he replied. "'Tis seldom that I git a bit; but thish is a shmall pace which a gintleman in the neighbourhood gave me for sharity."

"You live in a miserable house," I continued. "Are you all alone?"

"No, sor;" said he. "I've got an old woman, but she's out at prisent."

"And how much a year do you pay?" I asked.

"Well, I do not pay inything," said he; "but formerly I paid a shilling a week."

"How is that?"

"Well, ye see, sor, 'twas thish way. The man I paid it to rinted the hut from the firsht landlord, but gave up his tinancy; and the firsht landlord put me in sharge as a care-taker over the land hereaboot rint free, and allowed me a salary of a pinny a week besides."

"But how do you get your living? Have *you*

any land? It all appears to belong to the other huts, and you can't live upon a penny a week."

"And so it doesh, yer honour; but I've a patch ow praties higher up the hill, and I rear shickens; and, pwhat wid wan thing and another, me and the ould woman manage somehow."

From Glendalough to the sea valley follows valley without a break; and through them all a charming river flows; and all the banks are wooded gloriously, or broken into cliffs and crags, or stretch away in breezy moorlands to the mightier hills beyond. Including Glendalough itself, we passed, on our return journey, through no less than five of these vales in succession Below it were Laragh and Clara, the two through which we had driven in the morning; and these were followed by the Vale of Avondale and the Vale of Avoca, each of which we were now to visit.

At Rathdrum, the driver paused to refresh his horse, giving me an opportunity of conversing, in the meantime, with a small draper who was standing at the door of his shop—a very sober, sensible and intelligent fellow, whose appearance attracted me immediately. I was not long in learning that he was a Protestant, a member of the Church of Ireland, and a Unionist, and that there

were many others in the locality; that, in his opinion, Home Rule would simply be the ruin of the country, and that practically all the Protestants he knew, and many of the better class Catholics, thought the same.

"But what about the Protestant Home Rule Association?" I asked. "In England, the Parnellites pretend that they have a multitude of adherents among the Protestant population."

"Nothing at all of the sort," he answered. "There are scarcely any Protestants in it, and they are merely Protestants because they are not Catholics—men, in fact, who never attend a place of worship at all. There may be here and there a Dissenter who has joined the Association; but there are very few who are not freethinkers, or, at least, non-attenders at any place of worship, who will have anything to do with the movement."

By the by, if the Nationalists persist in parading the Protestant Home Rule Association before the British public, in spite of its numerical insignificance, why should not the Unionists retaliate by establishing a Catholic Unionist Association? Our observations forced us to the conclusion that there are many good Catholics in Ireland who are utterly opposed to the Parnellite propaganda; and, if the cause of the Union is to triumph, its

advocates should not leave a single stone unturned to further it. They must carry the war into the enemy's camp. If the few Protestant Home Rulers in Ireland are employed to delude John Bull into the belief that the Protestants of the country are much divided in opinion, the many Catholic Unionists must be applied as an antidote. If disloyal Irishmen invade English constituencies and exert their unquestionable powers of oratory in winning England over to connivance at their dubious designs, why should not loyal Englishmen invade Ireland in the same way, and tell the Irish peasant a few plain truths, and brush away the web of lies and sophistries with which his sight has been obscured, and show him that, in every English breast, the wish is beating to restore his realm to happiness; that crime and outrage and conspiracy are fatal to its hopes of progress; that free and equal justice is the only balm for "centuries of wrong"; and that this justice is not more—nay, not so much—the watchword of the party who have hitherto claimed his vote, as it is that of the party of the Union, which advocates justice to all—to Protestant and Catholic, to landlord and tenant, to rich and poor, to the Emerald Isle and to the United Kingdom alike; and that only by a respect for law, and a regard

for liberty, and a patient continuance in well-doing—by honest industry, and general thrift, and the harmonious co-operation of all classes, can the Land of the Oppressed again become a home of peace and prosperity and contentment, and, in a nobler sense than in the olden days, an "Island of Saints"? The men whose love for Ireland is none the less because they love the Empire also, and who are wishful to secure the weal of both, have a long and arduous task before them. They are only at the commencement of the struggle, as yet; and, if they grow discouraged, or relax a single effort until the cause is finally won, it will, in all probability, be irretrievably lost.

During the return journey, the driver had incidentally corroborated Pat Barratt's account of the recent visit of the Viceroy to Glendalough, and informed us that he had himself accompanied him on that occasion.

"He is not popular in Ireland, I suppose. What sort of a fellow is he?" I asked.

"Faith, he's the most dacent man I ever met!" he emphatically replied. "He hasn't the laste bit of pride aboot him at all; and he talked with me quite free and aisy the whole time. In all

my experience, I never came across a nicer gintleman !

Such was the testimony of an unprejudiced native concerning a nobleman whom it was customary to represent as the contemptible agent of an odious tyranny ; and who, because of his ancestry, and because he did not happen to agree with the opinions of the Irish party, and was anxious, according to his light, to serve his country, was held up to the public execration, and portrayed to an ignorant peasantry as the personification of baseness by a faction who have succeeded in reducing misrepresentation to a fine art, and who, if they would only speak the truth, would, like Othello, find their occupation gone.

We were now, however, approaching the residence of a man who holds, in the eyes of his countrymen, and in the eyes of the world, a position vastly more responsible and more distinguished than that of the Irish Viceroy himself. We were close to Avondale, the residence of Mr. Parnell ; and of him also the driver could speak with authority. Only on the previous day he had driven him some distance, and many a dozen times before ; for Rathdrum was the station at which Mr. Parnell alighted on his return journeys from London, or Dublin, or elsewhere ;

and the driver had known him for many years—known him when he lived the quiet life of a country gentleman, before he had entered the stormy sphere of politics, and made a name, which, for good or evil, is destined to be written very large upon the pages of English history. He was, he said, of a taciturn, uncommunicative nature, and had none of that bonhomie which distinguished the Marquess of Londonderry. As a landlord he was pretty good—"in fact, he has to be," our informant significantly continued—and his rents were reasonable, but he took care to exact them. He did not appear to think a great deal of his Protestantism; and, to illustrate the breadth of his opinions, stated that he permitted the local football clubs to have their matches in his park on Sunday afternoons.

And a beautiful park it is, charmingly situated, richly wooded, and approached by a very handsome gilded gate, flanked by pillars and castellated walls of gray stone, skilfully pointed. These had been erected, the driver told us, as a surprise during the temporary residence of the Irish leader in Kilmainham Gaol, to which he had been consigned with *many* others, for an *indefinite* period, *without* trial, and for a *political and undefined* offence by the very statesmen who are now

moving heaven and earth to witness the inexpiable guilt of the Government who have ventured to imprison *a few* individuals, for a *strictly limited* period, *after* a trial, and for offences *against the ordinary law of the land.*

On the right, amid the trees, is the residence of Mr. Parnell's agent, and, on the left, the farm; and, just beyond this, is the mansion itself—a long, plain, dingy, yellow building, neither better nor worse than the average dwelling-house of the English country squire; but overlooking, from its back windows, the beautiful Avondale, in the depths of which the river whose course we had so long been following meanders through a wilderness of woodland. We peered into its leafy recesses from an old ruin at the edge of the garden, which overhung it, and was overhung itself by the prickly branches of the blackberry. Beyond, a path went winding down amid the trees towards the valley; and, as we sauntered through the grounds, we saw a couple of gentlemen proceeding in that direction, one of whom was, we fancied, from subsequent information, no less a personage than the Hermit of Avondale himself, for such men were beginning to call him. And not without reason. His notorious disapproval of some of the methods of

his followers, his mysterious silence, his protracted absence from the scene of his political warfare, whether occasioned by ill-health, or dictated by profound policy, were exciting universal comment; and it seemed strange indeed that to-day, when, at Westminster, his lieutenants were preparing for the opening night's debate upon the Proclamation of the League, he should be wandering amid the woods of Avondale. We had already enquired concerning him from a number of men who were digging up the ground between the house and the valley, and constructing terraces and paths with the intention of making at least an apology for a garden; for nothing of the kind was visible as yet, and Art had not done much to supplement the handiwork of Nature, and transform the mansion into a fitting abode for a statesman so distinguished; but the workmen regarded us with suspicion, answering us in monosyllables, and apparently imagining that our questions were animated less by curiosity than by conspiracy. Indeed, they might have taken us for a couple of English Invincibles, so little could we learn from them; and, had they seen us, or had Mr. Parnell himself happened to notice us, as we clambered up a lofty wall, and, clinging to it like grim death, stared into the

farm-yard, it is probable that we should have been promptly conducted to the nearest lock-up.

We afterwards found that, about the time we saw the two gentlemen walking towards the valley, Mr. Parnell had gone to a saw-mill in that direction; so that we concluded that at least we had seen the back hair of the Uncrowned King. But, however this might have been, as we returned to the front of the house, and, after noticing, in a large apartment, a number of illuminated addresses, mute tokens of a nation's gratitude, were strolling up a shadowy avenue to the left, whom should we meet, face to face, but the mother of the great Irish leader and one of her domestics—the former a stately looking old lady with ringlets turning gray, and a very handsome costume of dark blue velvet, who appeared to have been superintending some outside arrangements, and altogether looked very homely and comfortable.

It has often been said that "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world"; and I could not help recalling the dictum as I looked at Mrs. Parnell, and wondering to what extent the idiosyncrasies of the son were due to the mother. Did she ever dream, as mothers will, of fame for him in future days? And did her admonitions and her

counsels sow the seeds which have borne such fruit for weal or woe within the last decade? When he toyed with the rattle, did she ever guess that he would one day hold the fate of governments in his grasp? and when he made mud-pies, if he ever indulged in an occupation which would have better befitted the infancy of a Healy or a Harrington, did she ever imagine that he was fated, in the future, to mould the destinies of a nation? I cannot say; but many thoughts went thronging through my brain as we freely walked about the grounds, and saw the silent rooms, which might have been deserted, without anyone to hinder us, or ask us whence we came and why; and there was much of admiration in my thoughts of him.

Descended from Sir John Parnell, against whose name, when the majority of the members of the Parliament on College Green were ready to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage, was written the single word, "incorruptible," Mr. Charles Stewart Parnell is the son of a nephew of Sir Henry Parnell, "than whom the Catholics of Ireland, in the deep night-time of bondage and oppression, never had champion more devoted, or advocate more indefatigable." His mother, the lady in

blue velvet, is an American, the daughter of Rear-Admiral Stewart, the American naval hero of 1812. Educated in England, the last and most illustrious member of a family of Irish patriots was in many respects more like an Englishman, or an American than an Irishman; and his early proclivities, as indicated by the driver, gave little intimation of the destiny in store for him. To the mangement of his estate, to the erection of saw-mills, and the opening out of mines his earlier manhood was devoted; whilst his tendencies were distinctly Conservative, and his tastes those of an ordinary country gentleman. The execution of Allen, Larkin and O'Brien for the murder of Sergeant Brett at Manchester appears to have first aroused his animus against the British Government. After an interval of travel in America and elsewhere, however, he resumed his quiet country life; and it was not until the General Election of 1874 that he unsuccessfully sought a seat in Parliament. But in 1875 he was more fortunate; and, when Ireland began to weary of the mild and reasonable policy of Mr. Butt, which did not meet with the candid treatment it deserved, Mr. Parnell rapidly usurped his position, and took the lead in organizing the violent and unreasonable party which now claim

to be the representatives of Irish opinion His first public speech was a complete failure. "He broke down utterly," says Mr. A. M. Sullivan, and many prophesied that, if ever he got to Westminster, he would be a silent member, or, at best, be known as "Single-speech Parnell." But, once within its walls, his influence was not long in making itself felt. To him we owe that fatal policy of obstruction which has crippled the power of Parliament, and delayed the legislation of the realm for years; and to his followers we are indebted for the degradation of the "first assembly of gentlemen in Europe" to the level of the tap-room, and to the lowering of the morals of a once respectable English party until it is well-nigh as vulgar and not half as honest as the troop of rowdies whom it weakly imitates.

Not that this policy of obstruction was wholly without excuse. Like most abuses, it had its origin in colourable pretexts; and the governments who have felt its baleful force have largely brought it on themselves. Some good undoubtedly resulted from the efforts of the rising Irish leader; and no weapon has been forged which is better calculated to induce English statesmen to concede the Irish demand than this by which the Irish leaders seek to make English legislation impossible.

They have not succeeded, and never will if Englishmen are what they were; but the plan which found its chief exponent in the lord of Avondale was a proof alike of the tenacity of his purpose, the astuteness of his mind, and the reckless disregard of the proprieties which developed in the coming years to such an extent that Mr. Gladstone spoke of him as the man who "has made himself beyond all others prominent in the attempt to destroy the authority of the law, and to substitute what would end in being nothing more nor less than anarchical oppression." "Calm, reserved, passionless, unmoved alike by praise or blame, by flattery or execration, a stranger to personal attachments, careless as to the reciprocation of personal regard, or the recognition of personal devotion, he is," says Mr. Sullivan, "the very antithesis of the emotional and impulsive Celt;" and the power which he has obtained over his followers is phenomenal.

But he is a statesman. Of that there cannot be any doubt. And, if he has sometimes stooped to conduct which it is impossible to palliate, and winked at deeds which it was his undoubted duty to condemn; if his word has been impugned, and his methods justly spoken of with reprobation, I cannot think that, in the pursuit of his main object,

he has been inspired by unworthy motives. What if he has disgraced our Parliament, and lashed the sister isle to frenzy, and supported schemes to stifle human liberty, and availed himself of help from foreigners who longed to wreck our fleets and set our cities in a blaze? There was method in it all. Had he not been taught by Mr. Gladstone that the Clerkenwell Explosion brought about the disestablishment of the Irish Church; that moonlight murders led to Liberal Land Bills; and that the wise men of England never moved a foot towards reform until they heard the distant roar of revolution? No! Immoral as I consider Mr. Parnell's policy to have been, it has largely resulted from our own obstinacy, and the cowardice which is creeping like a nightmare into our councils, and terrifying the men in whom we have been wont to put our trust. No words of mine shall minimise the lawlessness and fraud and crime which have sprung up like mushrooms under the shadow of the Irish leader's influence; and, although he has been judicially exonerated from the baser crimes attributed to him with such a reckless disregard of evidence to justify the charge, there still remains a verdict dark enough against his name. But I am not blind to the fact that we have brought our

troubles upon ourselves ; nor do I hesitate to repeat that in the taciturn and gloomy man whom we had seen descending to his ancestral vales, the neighbouring realm has found a statesman. A clearer mind, a greater force of character, a more skilful tactician—in fact, a more competent leader of a headstrong party, it would be difficult to name. In ten years his genius had sufficed to strike terror into the heart of one of the foremost politicians of the age, and to induce him to swallow the opinions of a lifetime, and follow where he ought to have led ; to disintegrate a party,and compel it to espouse a cause which it had been accustomed to regard as criminal, imbecile and hopeless. In spite of the lengthy catalogue of his misdemeanours, he stood out like a giant by comparison with the rabble he commanded; and I could not help feeling that,if he were the only person to be consulted by British statesmen in settling the Irish difficulty, it would be quite possible to arrive at a *modus vivendi* which would be beneficial and satisfactory to all parties, and reflect abiding credit upon all who were concerned in its consummation. With men like Mr.Parnell it is possible to reason. The case is hopeless when the fate of empires rests upon the words of individuals who

spend their time in dodging the police and bewailing their breeches.

From Avondale we drove to the Vale of Avoca, through delightful scenery, catching, on the way, a glimpse of Lugnaquilla, 3039 feet in height—the loftiest of the Wicklow Mountains, and second only to Carran Tual, the loftiest mountain in Ireland; and having our attention directed by the driver to an old woman in a cottage by the roadside upon whom Mr. Gladstone, during a visit to this part of Ireland, had suddenly called, at least, so the driver told us, and asked her if she could oblige him with a cup of tea. She readily complied, refusing to accept any payment for it; and the owner of the estate, having heard of her hospitality, was so pleased that he had annually sent her a supply of tea ever since. The roads along which we journeyed were still finely wooded, and nuts were hanging temptingly in many places from their leafy boughs; and the valley grew very beautiful when, just before reaching a large stone bridge, we dismounted, and, turning from the roadway to the left, and passing a fine old forest monarch—an oak, if I remember—known as Moore's Tree, attached to which are various

associations more or less reliable, we came, at last upon the Meeting of the Waters.

Immediately in front of us, was Castle Howard, a noble mansion that crowned some cliffs embowered in foliage; and, from the valley to the left, the Avonmore stole softly underneath them, another river flowing from another leafy valley, and underneath the bridge across whose mossy arch we were soon to journey further down the vale—a lesser stream, but not less beautiful—the little Avonbeg, delicious branches dipping in its dancing shallows as it slid in shadow from the mountains to the meeting-place. There was not any foam and rush and thunder of wild waters; but two clear rills that dallied with the pebbles, and kissed the foliage, and pressed their wet lips to the thirsty sward, until, at last, they musically mingled in a spot secluded from the busy world by leafy crags and waving heights of woodland.

It is questionable whether, as Moore sings:

"There is not in the wide world a valley so sweet
"As that vale in whose bosom the bright waters meet;"

but it is perfectly true that "Nature" has

"shed o'er the scene
Her purest of crystal and brightest of green;"

and that all

"the soft magic of streamlet" and "hill"

has been lavished on a landscape which is singularly fair; and when, to fancy's eye, the vision of the vale returns, I also do not hesitate to sing with him:

"Sweet vale of Avoca! how calm could I rest
In thy bosom of shade with the friends I love best;
Where the storms that we feel in this cold world should cease,
And our hearts, like thy waters, be mingled in peace!"

Beyond the meeting place, the river not only bears another name, but speedily assumes another colour; for, a little distance from the bridge, the green cliffs give place to bare rocks and precipices, and huge heaps of debris, the whole of which are shaded with every variety of yellow, the outward and visible sign of the copper and the sulphur with which these hills abound, and the workings of which have tinged the waters of the Avoca with a kindred hue, and poisoned all the fish in it. The workings, however, in spite of what some have said to the contrary, add to rather than detract from the scenery; for the rocks on either hand are lofty, the refuse strews their sides in almost perpendicular embankments, and the colours of the minerals are remarkably rich and varied; whilst the glorious foliage is still conspicuous in front and rear, contrasting curiously with the barren heights to the wild loveliness

of which the miners' cottages impart an element of humanness that is not without its charm. Unluckily, the mines upon the right appeared to have been pursued by that mysterious fatality which so persistently paralyses the hand of industrial enterprise in Ireland; for, like so many other mines and mills in all parts of the country, they were now disused. The mine upon the left, however, employed a considerable number of hands, and we saw a crowd of these in a level field across the river indulging in a game of football.

At the village of Avoca our driver left us, and, after having tea in an establisment where moderate refreshment for man and beast was provided at a moderate cost, we walked along the valley still further, through scenery as beautiful as any which we had noticed since leaving Rathdrum in the morning, the road resting in a sort of perpetual twilight owing to the luxuriance of the trees which flung their branches overhead, and, meeting, formed a leafy canopy; whilst below, upon the left, the forest monarchs sloped abruptly to the river, whose murmur thrilled us in the utter silence,

> "Like an audible eternity,
> Brooding the hushed mountains o'er."

The whole of this part of Wicklow is wonderfully wooded, and in the neighbourhood is Shillelah, famous for its oaks, and for the favourite Irish weapon "which never misses fire."

The reflections which the beauty of the scene excited were suddenly interrupted by my friend's falling full length into a wide gutter two or three feet deep, which ran between the foot-path and the road for a long distance, like an open sewer; and which, in the course of our conversation, we had completely forgotten. I never saw a person fall so suddenly, or look so much surprised. He did not waste any time in thinking about the matter, however; and, rising from the gutter to find his bones unbroken and his limbs unbruised, united with me in anathematizing the authorities responsible for the nuisance.

Our walk ended at Wooden Bridge, the station lights of which gleamed prettily below the road, the signals like so many rubies shining redly in the dusky valley where, close at hand, the river Aughrim joins the Avoca at the Second Meeting of the Waters. From hence we returned by rail, amid the darkness, through the woods of Avoca and Avondale, to Bray, the streets of which were growing quiet as we walked towards

the esplanade, and on to Lacey's Hotel. The esplanade itself was well-nigh deserted when, a little later, we sauntered forth again to listen to the waves that crawled, and curved, and hissed, and moaned, and muttered on the sandy shore.

CHAPTER IV.

"THE BRIGHTON OF IRELAND"—THE DARGLE—KINGSTOWN—THREE IRISH OPINIONS OF HOME RULE—DUBLIN AGAIN—THE GREAT IRISH RACE-COURSE—KILDARE—MONASTEREVEN—PORTARLINGTON—MARYBOROUGH—WE DISCUSS THE LAND QUESTION—A CHAT WITH A CHAMBERLAINITE—WE REACH ROSCREA.

Arising early in the morning, we rambled lazily about Bray Head, a gentle elevation with a wood upon its summit, and a road round it, the railway cutting cleaving it just above the shore; and gazed upon the white and prosperous town that lay below, with its spacious promenade, and grassy lawn, and band-stand—the only place in Ireland where we had noticed anything of the kind—backed by handsome terraces, and wide and well-built streets, and the spires of churches visible above them, and Killiney Hill towards the north, and, in between the two, a stretch of water covered with a slight mist.

Bray is known as "the Brighton of Ireland,"

and is certainly one of the most fashionable resorts in the country. To the rear of it the Sugar Loaves are situated, and, within a radius of a dozen miles, a variety of charming scenery is comprised. As we drove to the Dargle, one of the loveliest spots in Wicklow, we learnt from the driver that Protestantism and Unionism were active in the locality, though this we had already guessed from the character of the houses and the respectability of the people. He was, however, himself a Home Ruler. Another Home Ruler, who had directed us, on the previous night, to the hotel, told us that, though the Nationalists were once very strong in the town, there was now a difficulty in getting them together.

The Dargle, or "Wood of Oaks," is a magnificently timbered dell, about a mile in length, through which the river Dargle flows; and then, uniting with the Enniskerry, broadens into the Bray, and glides past the town in search of the adjacent sea, to swiftly end a course as brief as it is beautiful. For some distance, the river forms the boundary between the fine demesnes of Lord Powerscourt and Lord Monck, the latter of whom we met in the course of the drive.

Nothing can exceed the grace of this wide valley. The hills that bound it rise in places to a height of 300 feet, and are covered from base to summit with a cloak of indescribable vegetation; and, as we walked along the ascending path which follows the valley from the gate where we had left the car, and paused at times to peep from some point of vantage into its green recesses, or to crawl down amid the bushes till we caught faint glimpses of the river, winding underneath a maze of branches, we were almost spell-bound by its verdurous majesty. Of course the Dargle has the usual Lover's Leap; and it appeared to terminate opposite a small cottage at which we presently arrived in another great leafy hill; but this is not so, for the river flows into it from Crockan Pond, some miles away, receiving on its journey the foamy tribute of the Powerscourt Waterfall.

The cottage stood in an old-fashioned garden, filled with flowers; and round its door and windows clung the blushing rose, while, to the very eaves, the fuchsia climbed, and covered all the walls with red and purple tassels, and made the humble cot a place that kings might covet, for it seemed the very home of peace. And glad

indeed was I to find that, in this instance, appearances were not deceptive; for the old lady who lived in it told me, in a pleasant tone, and with a contented smile, that there was not any outrage or ill-feeling in this sweet spot—that she did not know whether Home Rule would do good or harm; but that Lord Powerscourt was the best of landlords, and that most of the landowners in this part of Ireland did their duty; and as for the people, "we are all," said she, "very quiet and happy, thank God!"

It had been raining slightly, at intervals, during the whole morning; but there was a heavy downpour as I stood chatting here, for I was loth to leave the old lady, and doubly loth to leave the Dargle altogether; and, as we descended, we paused repeatedly to gaze into its leafy hollows. At one point, we noticed a stone erection and a wooden bridge at the bottom of the valley; and here there was, we were told, a reservoir, the water supply of Bray, and Kingstown, and the capital flowing through the Dargle and crossing the stream at this point by means of the bridge.

A little after eleven, we started for Dublin by the Kingstown route, riding right along the shore, past Killiney Hill, and Dalkey Island, with their Druidical and other relics of "the days that are

no more;" and the town of Dalkey, known as a port before the fourteenth century, and still disclosing the remains of the fortifications which had been erected to defend it against Irish pirates; and then we came to Kingstown itself, and saw the splendid harbour, walled in from the fury of the sea, covering 250 acres, varying in depth from 13 to 27 feet, with a revolving light upon the eastern pier, and several steamers lying motionless along the wall. The town is large and prosperous, and, from its elevated and substantial streets, commands a charming view. Like Queenstown, which we were presently to see, it owes its name to a royal visit, for, prior to the embarkation of King George the Fourth, in 1821, it was called Dunleary, and was a mere fishing village. The visit is commemorated by an obelisk, as well as by this change of name. Beyond Kingstown, the railway runs through a succession of suburban haunts, with pleasant villas, and gardens, and bathing places, and martello towers.

Two young fellows in the train, with whom we entered into conversation, declared that the Proclamation of the League was justifiable, and that it would not hurt a single person who was well-disposed. They thought—and expressed them-

selves with unmistakable emphasis—that Home Rule would do more harm than good, and that the question would never be settled in Mr. Parnell's time; and a red-bearded man who took up the conversation after their departure, remarked that the Nationalists, to whom he applied an adjective which I refrain from repeating, did not know what they wanted; that every one of them had some whim of his own; that they would never be satisfied even if they got Home Rule; and that all that was really necessary was a good Land Purchase Scheme, but that the average price under Lord Ashbourne's Act, of which we reminded him, was much too high.

Arrived at Westland Row, we walked through Merrion Square, in which the premises of the Royal Dublin Society and the National Gallery of Ireland are situated, and where O'Connell for a time resided. From thence we proceeded past the house in which the Duke of Wellington was born, now occupied by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, to St. Stephen's Green again, and on to Harcourt Street Station, at which we had left our luggage on the previous day. We then hired a car, and drove at a rapid rate, and amid a dismal shower of rain, through many dismal by-ways full of wretched shops and squalid lodging-houses,

which looked trebly dingy after the fine mansions we had left; and, reaching the Liffey, we proceeded along its southern bank to King's Bridge Station, the large and bustling terminus of the Great Southern and Western Railway.

The train for Cork was positively crammed, and it was with the utmost difficulty that we managed to get seats; but at last we found room in a carriage full of entertaining company; and soon the bell rang, the engine whistled, and we slowly left the Irish capital. The railway passes the Royal Hospital of Kilmainham, established in 1675 on the site of a priory of Knights-Templar founded by Earl Strongbow. In the village of Kilmainham Brian Boroimhe spent the closing year of his life, and in the prison certain individuals fed like epicures, and amused themselves by issuing No Rent Manifestoes and making questionable Treaties. Next we saw the locomotive depôt at Inchicore, with its large sheds and workshops, and the cottages of the workmen adjoining, and left, a mile to the right, the village of Chapelizod, where, in 989, Brian Boroimhe, and, in 1690, William of Orange, after the Battle of the Boyne, are said to have respectively encamped. Proceeding in the same direction, the line leads through Clondalkin, which boasts an un-

usually perfect round tower. Here the palace of the Danish King, Awliffe, and an ancient monastery stood. Thence we run within a short distance of Lucan, formerly notable by reason of its spas, and on to Hazelhatch, not far from Celbridge, in the abbey of which "Vanessa," one of the inamorata of the Irish Dean who has favoured posterity with the adventures of Lemuel Gulliver resided. At Oughterard, identical in name with the village in Galway which I have described, the ruins of another round tower are visible upon a hill. Crossing the Liffey by a long wooden bridge, and getting into the neighbourhood of Naas, we presently see the Bog of Allen again, and, rising from it, the Hill of Allen, the scene of one of Ossian's poems, and the reputed residence of Fin M'Coul. Soon we reach Newbridge, where there is a military station, and where the line again crosses the Liffey, this time by a bridge of stone. Then we ride over the Curragh, six miles by two in area, and the scene, in 1234, of the death of Lord Montemarisco during the insurrection led by the Earl of Pembroke; and, in 1406, of a battle between few Englishmen, and about two hundred Irishmen under the Prior of Connell Abbey, the ruins of which are in the neighbourhood. Upon this grassy plain, the Volunteers paraded, and,

later, the United Irishmen to the number of 30,000. Originally it was covered by a forest, and ancient earthworks are still to be found upon it. It is now famous as the great Irish race-course—some horses were being exercised there as we passed—and a very important military encampment. A mile beyond it is Kildare, "the City renowned for Saints" —an insignificant little place, so far as we could see, but a portion of it hidden by a hill on which a third round tower is standing, the original conical top of which has been replaced by a Gothic battlement. Kildare was founded in the sixth century, and was ravaged repeatedly by the Danes and by the Kings of Leinster. Afterwards the English took it and built a castle and held a Parliament here. It is also interesting as the site of a cathedral, at which, in the Chapel of St. Bridgid, which still exists, the nuns of the city are supposed to have maintained, for the benefit of poor strangers, a fire which never went out for a thousand years; and of the abbey in which Aod Dubb, the King of Leinster, took upon himself the Augustinian habit and forsook his throne for works of holiness. And, among the various other attractions of the neighbourhood, who has not heard of "Sweet Norah, the pride of Kildare?" At Monastereven stands Moore Abbey, the seat of the Marquess of Drogheda,

upon the site of a priory founded by St. Evan in the seventh century, which exercised the privileges of sanctuary. Beyond the town we cross the Barrow, and reach Portarlington, situated upon its banks, and once called Coltodry. It derives its present name from Lord Arlington, the nobleman who created the port, in the reign of Charles the Second. In the reign of William the Third, who granted the place to General Rouvigny, many French and Flemish Protestants settled in it; and among its other claims to notice may be mentioned the fact that the Duke of Wellington received his early education there. Soon we arrived at Maryborough, so called after Queen Mary, and the chief town in Queen's County. On the heath at Maryborough, a famous battle between the peoples of Munster and Leinster was fought in the sixth century. Passing within a short distance of the ruins of Aghaboe Abbey, founded in the sixth century by St. Canice, son of Laidee, a poet eminent in his day, and robbed and burnt by Dermot MacGil Phadrig in 1346, we arrived at Ballybrophy, and here we left the train to enable us to visit Roscrea.

It was with much regret that we parted from our fellow-passengers, for they included two young gentlemen farmers, and another red-

bearded gentleman, with eye-glasses, all of whom we found to be alike intelligent and agreeable. There was not anything particularly picturesque upon the journey. The land was flat and fertile, and it was possible to reflect, as one gazed upon it, that, after all, there were many Irish tenants who did not live in mud cabins, and many Irish holdings which exceeded six acres in extent, and consisted of something more than barren bogland; but, except for this fact, and for the historical associations of the various places through which we passed—the crumbling ruins which I have mentioned, and various others of less importance and the extraordinary number of noblemen's seats along the line, the scenery was uninteresting.

Accordingly, when the two young farmers showed a disposition to be friendly, I met their advances half way, and found, from the conversation which ensued, that they were returning from the Dublin Horse Show. One of them told me that he had purchased his holding from the Irish Church Commisioners, at thirty years' purchase, and considered that, having regard to the bad times, Mr. Balfour's Land Act ought to have extended the period of repayment. He did not know much about another grievance which the Goverment had left to rankle—that is to say,

he exclusion of the holders of town parks from its operation ; but he had the strongest sympathy with the Irish tenantry, and denounced evictions in unmeasured terms, declaring that the tenants could not afford to pay more than rates and taxes, though, strangely enough, they can afford to pay heavy subscriptions to the National League, and to deposit increasing sums in the * Savings Banks, and to drink increasing quantities of whisky, and to build, in the poorest localities, churches which would be ornaments to the finest cities. Neither of them, however, was much enamoured of Home Rule, and, indeed, the least loquacious of the two was, I gathered, a Conservative. Another poorer Irishman occasionally joined in the conversation. He, on the contrary, was an ardent Nationalist, principally because he fondly fancied that an Irish Parliament would, in some mysterious manner, which nobody whom we met during the whole of our Irish journeyings was able to satisfactorily explain, develop Irish trade.

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* Mr. Hurlbert publishes a schedule of twelve typical Irish districts where the Plan of Campaign has been inaugurated, in each of which, with one exception, the deposits in the local Savings Banks have increased enormously during the period of the agitation, the aggregate increase being over sixty per cent; and he cites the observation of a gentleman whose information he had usually found to be reliable that "the official reports will show that the annual outlay upon whisky in Ireland equals the sum saved to the tenants by the reductions in rent."

It is quite true that many expressed themselves in favour of protection ; but this, which appeared to be the only suggestion they had to offer upon the subject, was distinctly prohibited by Mr. Gladstone's Bill. Among the number who favoured it was the red-bearded gentleman, with whom Mr. Richardson had been conversing all the way from Dublin, and with whom, towards the close of the journey, I had considerable talk myself. He also had a farm, and kept twenty milch cows ; but he stated that, if his farm were all upon which he had to depend, he should not be able to pay his rent, and he thought the imposition of duties on imports an indispensable preliminary to the revival of Irish industries.

"As against Great Britain, as well as the outside world?" I asked.

"Yes," said he, "for most of our manufactured articles come from you ; but I suppose you would object?"

I said that most decidedly we should, and that I thought it would be in the highest degree inexpedient to allow Ireland to shut us out from her markets, as the colonies, in spite of their effusive professions of love and lovalty, persist in doing.

Though he had stated that he was not able

to make his rent out of the produce of his farm, he was frank enough to declare that he did not think it would be just to offer the landlords less than had been offered by Mr. Gladstone as the price of the surrender of their estates; but he agreed with the exception which had been taken to the new Land Act on account of its fixing prices alone as the standard by which to arrive at a fair rent. When I enquired what *was* a fair rent, he could only say that there were other things to take into consideration, and especially the fluctuations in the crops. To fix an absolutely fair rent would be an impossibility. A score of circumstances would have to weigh. No system save an annual personal inspection of every farm in Ireland, and a minute enquiry into the character, capacity, and means of every Irish farmer, as well as the precise state of his crops and the variation in prices, could secure it; and this is a proposal so impracticable that to merely state it is to reduce it to an absurdity. To adopt the rise and fall in prices as the standard may not meet all the necessities of the case, but at least it has the merit of being feasible and self-working.

As to the Proclamation of the League, our friend quite approved of it. He spoke of the Saxon oppressors of his native land as the fairest-

minded men in the world, was an ardent believer in the principles of Mr. Chamberlain, and thought that, in the adoption of some moderate scheme on federal lines such as that statesman had seemed disposed to favour, we should be able to find a solution of the difficulty which would be satisfactory to all parties.

After a brief interval of waiting, we entered another train, and, leaving Ballybrophy, proceeded to Roscrea. During the journey, which was soon over, we had a chat with a young fellow who resided there. He said that there were a large number of Unionists in the neighbourhood; and that, if Home Rule were granted to Ireland, so much was the country divided that continual bloodshed would result from it.

CHAPTER V.

THE SIGHTS OF ROSCREA—THE COLLEEN AT THE COUNTER—A HAPPY FAMILY—ANOTHER UNIONIST—THE ABBEY OF ST. JOSEPH—HOW THE MONKS RECEIVED US—THE MYSTERIOUS LADY—FATHER LEO—A SOLEMN SERVICE—NIGHT IN THE ABBEY.

STROLLING from the station, we entered the town by a long street, the upper end of which was flanked on either side by poor little thatched white cottages. These gave us, at the outset, a bad opinion of the place. However, we arranged for a car to take us, in an hour or so, to the Trappist Abbey of St. Joseph, which closed at seven, and at which we expected to spend the night, and then prepared for a ramble. We turned to the left, and passing over a little river, reached the church, the yard of which is entered through the gable end of the ancient church of St. Cronan, the saint who is said to have baptised our old friend, St. Kevin. In it there is a fine circular cross with a broken figure of the Saviour, fronting the street, and known as

the Shrine of St. Cronan. Exactly opposite, and adjoining the ruins of a mill which was destroyed by fire some twenty years ago—a scene of which the man who was to drive us to St. Joseph's retained a vivid recollection — we saw a round tower, of course "one of the largest in the kingdom," but damaged by lightning, and, unlike the majority of these strange old structures, entirely built with square stones. Turning to the right, we entered a wide street containing a good hotel and some large shops; and, passing on, we gazed at the ruins of the Castle of King John. Then, strolling down another pleasant street or two, we came to the great tower of the Franciscan Friary established here in 1490, which is still used as a belfry; and, sauntering underneath it, came upon a church, and glanced within, and thence proceeded to the green and leafy burial ground beyond. And when, returning up the street which led from the station, we noticed that, at its lower end, it was bordered by clean-looking shops and substantial houses; and saw a dozen other pretty streets, the poorest of them bright and cheerful-looking, and pondered on the smiling undulations of the land encompassing the town, and saw the purple summits of Slieve Bloom conspicuous above the rest

when, in short, we had realized what the town was really like—how numerous were its antiquities—how homely its shops and houses—how peaceful its simple thoroughfares, and how prosperous its people, we changed our opinion of it wonderfully; and, in our memories, it finds a place among the pleasantest of all the tiny towns that dot the Emerald Isle.

In a shop at which we called, we found a smiling, healthy, respectable and intelligent Irish girl who seemed much surprised to learn that, although we were not Roman Catholics, we intended to spend the night at St. Joseph's ; and she told us that she did not think they would take us in, and that, though many Catholics stayed there, she did not know of any Protestants who had done so.

"Well," I said, "we intend to try!"

And then we got on to other topics, for the colleen at the counter was buxom, agreeable and communicative, and we were young and sentimental, and, as the reader will already have concluded, Mr. Richardson had a weakness that way. In the course of a long chat, she confirmed the words of our friend in the train from Ballybrophy as to the large number of Protestants in Roscrea and the district, practically all of whom

were opposed to Home Rule ; but, though they were thus divided, the inhabitants were, she said, "a good people," living together on the friendliest of terms, and Roscrea was "a very happy little place," which was precisely what it looked. But she was not going to let us run away with the idea that this life of harmony was the result of religious and political lukewarmness, "for," she added, "all of us are very firm in maintaining our opinions."

Whilst I was hunting up the man from whom we had hired the car, Mr. Richardson walked back to the station to enquire as to the time the trains left for Limerick on the following morning. I afterwards stepped across the street, and, peeping in above the half-door of one of the cottages, I saw a healthy-looking man and woman, of middle age, and several healthy children standing round the hearth ; and, saluting them, asked if I might enter.

"To be sure ye can, sor, though 'tis but a poor little place," was the prompt reply ; and straightway the husband opened the door, and, quieting a smart young cur which eyed me suspiciously from behind his legs, told me to "walk in and take a sate ;" whilst his wife dusted a clumsy wooden chair, and, with many apologies,

proferred it to me. And so I sat on the hearth, chatting familiarly with these good people, and praising their bonny youngsters, which seemed to please them mightily; and, in front of me, a herring was broiling on a grid above the fire of turf that smouldered on the earthen hearth. There were not many articles of furniture, and, altogether, it *was* "a poor little place;" and I was amused, on glancing round, to see my friend gazing over the door with wonderment at the strange sight we presented, the husband and wife doing all they could to entertain me, the sturdy little children staring with open eyes and mouths at the stranger seated so nonchalantly before the fire, and the dog peering from behind his master with looks which had changed from rage to curiosity.

"Come in!" said I; and, my host and hostess seconding the appeal, Mr. Richardson entered, and joined in the conversation.

I was not long in discovering that the family were Home Rulers, and, according to their version, nearly the whole of the people of the town were the same; but they agreed with the colleen at the counter in saying that all parties lived together in peace and quietness, and on the best of terms.

Leading from the room in which we were sitting was another small apartment, which appeared to be a bedroom, and our hostess readily acceded to our request to see it, though, like good housewives all the world over, she was jealous of her domestic reputation, and profuse in her apologies for the humble chamber which "was all they had to show the gintlemin." As a matter of fact, it was scarcely three yards square, and nearly all that it contained in the way of furniture was a bed, and a chair; but the walls were bright with prints of the saints and of the Saviour, and a likeness of some eminent priest which had been presented with "United Ireland," and, opposite the door, in a very prominent position, a picture of Mr. Parnell; whilst, underneath the picture, were one or two tiny images of the Man of Sorrows which they held in great reverence, and several minor tokens of their devotion to the faith. Poor as the place was, the hearts within it were kindly and the faces bright; and, though the bedroom *was* so humble, they were vastly better off than thousands of their countrymen who had not any bedroom at all, and even shared the solitary room which served for night and day with cows and pigs and poultry.

The drive to the Abbey through the sweet

afternoon sunshine, with glimpses of blue mountains to the right of us, and undulating fields and clustering trees on either hand, was very enjoyable. The road led across the brook which separates the county of Tipperary, in which Roscrea is situated, from King's County, whilst, just outside the station, we had crossed the boundary between Tipperary and Queen's County.

The driver and the people in the house we had last visited both assured us that we need not have any fear as to our reception at St. Joseph's; that the fact that we were not Roman Catholics would not prevent them from treating us with the utmost hospitality; and "indade," said the former, "when ye get there, ye'll not be afther lavin' at all!" He was, he told us, himself a Catholic; but, when we asked him what were his opinions concerning Home Rule, he promptly declared that it would "do a great dale of harrm to the counthry," and that, prior to the agitation, "the paple had plinty of work, and were much betther off altogether; but sure," he added significantly "if I was to say thish openly among thim, they'd shoot me like a cock!"

At last we approached an extensive park, with a well-built house to the right, just outside the

entrance gates. The park belonged to the monkish Order whose acquaintance we expected to make, and the house was known as the Lady's Retreat, and was used to accommodate lady visitors, and especially those who resorted to the abbey from a religious motive. Passing through the gateway in the shadow of the greenest and the grandest trees, a sward of velvet stretching under them, we soon approached a long white mansion of substantial and elegant appearance, with a very large and stately church, directly to the left of it, but disconnected; and, riding up to the open door, we dismounted.

Telling our driver to wait a moment, I approached the door and rang the bell, not without some anxiety as to the nature of our reception. Through another open door, I noticed one or two monkish forms in motion; and, in a few seconds, a tall personage with black whiskers, a white robe reaching to the ground, a leathern girdle, and a black cowl, which hung loosely on his shoulders, advanced towards us with a look upon his face that appeared to me to be stern and unpromising. He gazed at us enquiringly, and I at once proceeded to explain that we were English travellers anxious to see as much of the country as we could; and, having heard that it was the custom

of the Trappist Order to entertain visitors, and being wishful to see something of their mode of life, we had taken the liberty, although we were not Roman Catholics, of paying a visit to St. Joseph's.

In a moment his demeanour changed. He warmly bade us welcome, told us to leave our luggage in the hall, and, on hearing that we only proposed to stay for one night, expressed his regret that we could not extend our visit. He then asked us at what time it would be necessary for us to depart, and, on our mentioning the fact that there were two morning trains to Limerick, whither it was our intention, in the first instance, to proceed, he recommended us to go by the later one, and said that he would do all that he could to assist us in making our arrangements for the subsequent portions of the journey.

Accordingly, we asked the driver to meet us at an hour sufficiently early to enable us to catch the second train, and at the same time, give us an extra half hour or so at Roscrea. Our host then asked us whether we had dined. We answered him in the negative, and he said that he would at once order something for us, expressed his regret that the day was Friday, and remarked, with a smile, "Though ye are not Papists, I shall have to make ye so for once!" Having conducted us to a

pleasant garden at the back of the mansion, the whole of which was set apart as a Guest House, he left us.

Here the grounds were peculiarly beautiful, fine undulating lawns and graceful pathways winding in every direction ; whilst, beyond their limits, the neighbouring hills were visible, and above the tops of these, the sun was setting, and his glances, falling on a stream that ran amid the fertile fields which intervened, transformed the water into one long shimmering sheet of gold. The entire surroundings were agreeable in the extreme, and the stately old white house at the end of the garden formed an appropriate background to the vision of quiet rural beauty and calm and peaceful life; whilst the hills in the distance rose like ramparts, guarding it from all the hubbub of the world without. To the right was a large garden full of vegetables and fruit trees, and surrounded by a lofty wall ; but the gate was locked, and so we could not enter.

Clambering over a wire fence, we suddenly came upon two or three monks, enjoying the prospect from the elevated ground in this vicinity. They stared at us in such a manner as to indicate that they did not at all approve of our gymnastic method of exploration ; but, on hearing our

apologies, became very friendly, one of them walking to and fro with us in the grounds for some time. He led us presently to a rude stone recess which had been erected to shelter an image of Christ which had been presented to the monks by a gentleman who was said to have miraculously benefited by a visit to Lourdes. This recess was quite gay with religious pictures and crosses and relics, which had been deposited there by such of the people of the district as desired to testify their devotion ; and it was plain that around the place they imagined a peculiar sanctity to linger.

We came across several monks in the course of our ramble, some of them attired like the one who had given us welcome, and some—the lay brothers, to whom the principal portion of the secular work of the monastery is entrusted—being distinguished by the fact that their robes were brown instead of white. One of the former was talking to a lady, young, and merry and extremely beautiful, and laughing and joking with her in a free and easy manner which almost excited our envy, as it certainly excited our curiosity ; but the mystery was promptly explained by the monk to whom we had first spoken, and who now appeared to tell us that

our meal awaited us. She was merely a lady visitor, he said, whom the monk in question was conducting over the grounds.

In the large and handsome dining hall to which we were invited the meal was spread. It consisted of eggs,and bread, and home-made butter, each very fresh and wholesome, with tea which proved that the brothers knew how to brew "the cup that cheers but not inebriates;" and we did it ample justice, chatting, meanwhile, in the friendliest manner possible with Father Leo, as we learnt that the monk who had taken us in charge was called. We soon discovered him to be a man of perfect breeding and much intelligence, and he exerted himself to the utmost to minister to our convenience and make us feel at home. During a portion of the meal, a tall brown-bearded, brown-robed lay brother, with a rich complexion which bespoke a temperate diet and the healthiest of constitutions, stood by us and joined in the conversation. This led from the abbey and its surroundings to ourselves and our travels—the places we had already visited, and the route we intended to follow; and thence to the Irish Land Question, and, finally, to Home Rule. Father Leo could tell us little about the adjacent country, and he was quite interested

in the description we gave him of Roscrea; for he had never seen it save when, some ten years ago, he first came to St. Joseph's from the older abbey at Mount Melleray, in County Waterford, which we hoped to visit, and of which St. Joseph's is an offshoot, the monks not being allowed out of the grounds except in any case of necessity or grave emergency; and his information concerning current events was drawn solely from the conversations which he had with the visitors, it being a rule of the monastery that none of the monks except the Superior is to read a newspaper. Both our companions were, however, Home Rulers, though their knowledge of the subject was imperfect, and some of their ideas exceedingly crude. They each declared that they did not wish for separation, but appeared to have little conception of the nature of Mr. Gladstone's proposals; and, when I asked Father Leo whether he thought it would be necessary, in order to revive Irish industries, to empower the Irish Parliament to impose a protective duty against Great Britain, he did not seem able to comprehend me at all until I had explained the matter with some minuteness.

When the meal was ended he asked us whether we should like to go into the church

where the service known as Complin was proceeding; and, answering the question in the affirmative, we followed him to the noble white stone edifice to which I have already alluded. The fine proportions of its interior were almost obscured by the growing twilight; but we could catch a vision of dim pillars, and of the lofty roof, and, in the chancel far away, could see the glare of the candles on the altar, casting shadows in the silent nave beyond; and could hear, although we could not see, for the nave was separated from the chancel by a beautiful screen, the muttered responses of the monks at prayer, and the yearning voice of the organ, that rose and fell mysteriously, and thrilled us as it echoed up the gloomy aisles and lingered in the vaulted roof, and the rustle of the monks upon their knees, and then a dead silence, and then the shuffling sound of people rising, and the measured tramp of feet; and could watch the waning of the altar-lights, that touched the pillars with a faint illumination, but left the shadows darker by comparison; and, at last, our guide, who had listened in an attitude of awe, and only spoken to us once or twice in a low whisper, and by whose side we stood in silence in the gathering gloom—the only persons in the church

—motioned to us gently that the strangely solemn rites were over.

The monks rise at two and retire at eight, winter and summer alike; and, as the latter hour was fast approaching, we returned to the Guest House; and, following Father Leo, who procured a lighted candle in the hall, we mounted a broad and fine old staircase, on which an ancient clock was ticking mournfully. Proceeding up a long, dark corridor which extended the whole length of the building, he pushed a couple of doors open, on opposite sides of the passage, and told us that, in the rooms to which they led, we were to slumber for the night.

"As you are not On Retreat," he continued, "you may sit together, if you like. In accordance with the rules of the Order, we retire at eight; but we allow visitors to sit up till ten, and you can occupy either or both of the rooms, just as you please. And now, gentlemen, is there anything more I can do for you? If not, I will wish you good-night, and I hope you may sleep well."

We thanked him heartily, assured him that we should be very comfortable, and were proceeding to examine the rooms and to talk over the novelty of our position, when we heard a tap at the door, and, on opening it, found that our

considerate friend had been to the trouble of procuring us a large Irish atlas and a comprehensive guide, in order to assist us, as he had promised, n making arrangements for our further wanderings —a piece of thoughtfulness which completed our debt of gratitude—and then, once more bidding us good-night, he left us.

For two hours we reclined in the cosy chairs with which the room we had first entered was furnished, making plans for the morrow, recalling the experience of the past two days, or perusing the books of devotion which lay upon the table. Each of the rooms was large and lofty, and each contained a snowy bed, and was otherwise well furnished, although in each the floor was bare. On the mantelpiece was a beautiful ebony crucifix, with the figure of Christ, exquisitely wrought in silver; a couple of candles, in massive silver candlesticks, stood upon the table, amid a crowd of monkish treatises and exhortations to a life of holiness; whilst, on the walls, were printed copies of the regulations which have to be observed in summer and winter respectively by all persons who visit the monastery On Retreat. I subjoin a copy of the winter regulations, which Mr. Richardson occupied himself in making whilst I was engaged in jotting

down a few notes of the journey. Those for the summer are substantially the same.

WINTER EXERCISES—14TH SEPTEMBER TO EASTER.

H. M.	
6	Rise.
6-30	Morning Prayer and Meditation, followed by Angelus.
7-30	Hours.
8	Assist at Community Mass.
9	Breakfast and Recreation.
10-30	Spiritual Reading, Private Devotions.
11-30	Examination of Conscience, followed by Angelus.
12	Visit to the Blessed Sacrament.
12-30	Confession and Spiritual Reading.
2	Dinner and Recreation.
3-30	Spiritual Reading.
4	Visit to the Blessed Sacrament.
4-30	Assist at Vespers of Community.
5-15	Supper and Recreation.
6	Assist at Complin of Community, Angelus, Examination of Conscience.
7	Private Devotions.
10	Extinguish Lights.

We had closed the shutters, and unbroken

silence reigned throughout the strange old mansion; and when, a little before ten, we opened the door and crossed over into the other room, where we had left our luggage, and in which we had both decided to sleep, the great long passage to which I have referred was utterly dark and deserted save that, at the end remote from us, a vague light streamed across it, apparently proceeding from some silent chamber in which it was easy to picture a grim old father muttering his prayers; or listening for our voices, or the sound of our footsteps; or haply planning some deep scheme for stamping out the heresy which, in the light of modern thought, was creeping like some mighty parasite around "the one true church" to strangle it; whilst, on the stairs, the measured ticking of the clock seemed to tell, amid the deathlike stillness, how time was fleeting, and the hours, like phantoms, hurrying towards eternity. The boards creaked as we crossed the passage, and the light threw fantastic shadows on the wall; and we half expected to see some cowled old monk approach, upbraiding us, and asking why, at this unseemly hour, with flippant feet, we woke the echoes and disturbed him in his thoughts of holiness. But no one interfered with us, and we

gained the room, and drew the shutters, and prepared for rest.

In one corner, there was a mysterious door, leading we knew not whither. We tried the handle, but the door was locked; and, as we could not solve the puzzle, we blew out the candles, and threw open the shutters. A dim radiance was streaming over the lawn and trees, and lending everything outside an air of awful solitude and ghostliness; and, scarcely had we drawn the sheets around us and sought the gracious influence of sleep, when we began to hear strange noises—vague rustlings in places which we could not indicate, and sounds we could not fathom. Our thoughts were full of the quaint old legends of the past—of stern inquisitors, and grisly cells, and spectral visitations; our nerves were tensely strung, and our imaginations highly wrought by our surroundings; and a thousand curious fancies, born of tales of eras full of superstition, crime and cruelty, were floating indefinably across our minds. Was someone creeping stealthily up the passage, or listening at the door? Or did some cowled old father watch and hearken in the cell which it was easy to picture beyond the door we could not open? Or could it be that some sacrilegious wretch was attempting the windows,

in the hope of gaining admittance to the silent house and stealing its silver candlesticks and crucifixes? Or was the noise occasioned by a spirit of the night—the ghost of some pale nun or buried father hovering around this haunt of holiness? Or was its simply caused by rats?

CHAPTER VI.

WE ARE CONDUCTED OVER THE ABBEY—"THE HAPPIEST OF ALL LIVES"—THE LEGEND OF THE BARBERRY TREE—WE ARE INSTRUCTED IN THE FAITH—THE LADY'S RETREAT—THE CONVENT—A GRACIOUS NUN—THE RUINED CASTLE—OFF TO THE SHANNON—THE LEGEND OF THE DEVIL'S BIT MOUNTAINS—NENAGH—OUR FRIEND THE VET.—A REMINISCENCE OF BODYKE.

We awoke pretty early; the light was falling pleasantly through the lofty windows, and the trees and hills and gardens smiled outside; whilst, within the room, everything looked exactly as we had left it ere we sank to sleep. There was not any evidence of visitors, either ghostly or monastic; the beds were soft and clean and comfortable, and we rose refreshed, with all the dismal fancies of the midnight banished by the glistening presence of the day. And when we left the room, and walked along the lonely corridor, we observed that, at its opposite extremity, there was a window; and saw that it must have been the moonlight streaming through

this which had fallen on the floor upon the previous night, and led us to imagine that some monk was meditating there within the silence of his cell. In fact, we began to think that we had been left in entire possession of the great mansion, for we did not notice any other guests, and the monks resided in a separate building adjoining the Church.

It was not Friday to-day, and so, in addition to the fresh eggs, and the wholesome bread, and the home-made butter, we were regaled with cold ham; and, while we breakfasted, we chatted pleasantly, as on the previous night, with Father Leo, and with the ruddy, brown-whiskered lay brother who attended to our wants; and then we followed Father Leo through many stately rooms, with moulded cornices, and lofty windows, and elaborate mantelpieces, and pictures of distinguished monks upon the walls—including that of the Abbot of Mount Melleray—and then he led us to the Church, a noble building with its spacious aisles, and tall white pillars, and pointed arches, and fine windows, and carved confessionals, and beautiful lesser altars in side niches for the use of the priests who visited St. Joseph's On Retreat. The missals of the monks were artistically illuminated, and were especially large and hand-

some. But the charm of the edifice depended upon the symmetry of its design rather than upon the richness of its ornaments.

Beyond it, were the outbuildings of the mansion. These had been utilized for the accommodation of the fraternity, but extensive alterations and additions were in progress: a perfect range of cloisters was already planned, and partly built; and it was clear that the wants of the Order would be admirably met when the work was completed.

About the first place we visited was the Refectory, in which several plain wooden tables were ranged, each provided with salt and other condiments to improve the flavour of the vegetable fare on which the brotherhood subsisted. The name of each monk was printed opposite his seat, and, at the head of the room, was a short cross table at which the Prior and the two monks who were next in authority were wont to sit. The appointment of an abbot was at present under consideration. In summer, the community were only allowed to partake of two meals a day, and all of them had endeavoured to illustrate the depth of their devotion by partaking of only one meal a day; but the majority had been compelled to abandon the experiment, as only the very strongest

constitutions were able to endure the deprivation. The monks were never allowed to address each other directly save in case of some overwhelming occasion; but, when it was absolutely necessary, they might communicate through the Prior. While the meal was in progress, it was the custom for one to read aloud from some manual of devotion; and here and everywhere the eye continually rested upon the cross, or the virgin, or the saints, or some sacred picture or relic the tendency of which was to minister to the contemplation of divine things, this being the object of the Order.

We also visited the rooms devoted to the use of novices, and for the instruction of the monks in the faith; and entered one of their cells, a small, bare, cheerless-looking chamber, with a table, and a chair, and a religious print or two, and the usual black crucifix, with the Man of Sorrows, wrought in silver, stretched upon it with a brow of agony.

The Dormitory was a long apartment divided by wooden partitions into little nooks about as large as bathing boxes, each provided with a hard bed. A curtain shut each of them off from the main room itself, and to these comfortless apartments the monks nightly repaired, as I have already

stated, at eight o'clock, rising,winter and summer alike, at two, and devoting the whole day, with certain intervals for meals and exercise, to religious services, or instruction in the faith, or reading, or meditation. In one or two of the rooms, we noticed upon the walls a curious print representing the life of a Trappist from his initiation to his interment, and including a representation of the penance which the monks are compelled to undergo for any deviation from the regulations of the Order.

Father Leo next conducted us to a quiet grassy corner where two or three black crosses indicated that we had reached the burial ground. The community had now occupied the premises, which had been presented to them by the last owner, for about ten years, and the death-roll was not great, as yet ; but, having once finally decided to sacrifice all human ties,and bid the world " and all its glittering snares, adieu," there was not any turning back. They were permitted to remain on probation for a term, I believe, of five years ; and if, after that experience of the privations and the sacrifices involved in their vow, they were willing to continue in the monastery, the world henceforth was dead to them, and, within that limited area, they were doomed to an imprisonment which the

grave alone would terminate. The way from their life of hardship led through the silent corner where the crosses stood to indicate the number who had found emancipation, and had passed towards

> "The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
> No traveller returns."

But:

> "Stone walls do not a prison make,
> Nor iron bars a cage;"

and on the faces of some of the monks we saw and especially upon the faces of the lay brothers, there was a smile of placid contentment which predisposed us to credit Father Leo when he told us, with a serene light in his earnest eyes, that he believed that this was "the happiest of all lives." It is true that we have our little mortifications," he said; "but we do not find them irksome. We are happy here, and of course we expect to be very happy hereafter!"

From the burial ground we passed into the fresh and open park again, and certainly, as we saw the sunlight glittering on the moist leaves and the velvet lawns, with their endless knolls and slopes, and the water, and the hills, and gazed upon the graceful outlines of the Church, and admired the stately Guest House, and pictured all the hopes of immortality which came to vivify

their daily lives and reconcile them to the "light affliction" which, they all believed, would work for them "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," it became less difficult to understand their healthy faces and their quiet mien. The faces, however, of the monks who did not participate in the duty of attending to the guests were often stern, and pinched, and narrow; and it moved us to observe the expression of the silent fathers who, with gown and cowl and downcast head, were hurrying along the corridors, or busy in the performance of the various duties of the day.

On the lawn, Father Leo showed us a splendid barberry tree, thickly covered with clusters of long, tartly-flavoured red-berries; and told us that the story ran that, underneath the tree, a mighty treasure was concealed, the lady of the house, in times long past, having instructed her servant to bury it at this spot, and shot him immediately on his accomplishment of the task, in order to prevent the possibility of his betraying her secret. What became of the lady, and how the secret leaked out, and where the money went, or whether it was still interred, we did not learn.

We were now able to enter the kitchen garden, for our conductor had a key at his girdle, and

readily opened the door which had barred our passage on the previous night. The enclosure was of considerable extent, and contained the majority of the best known English fruits and vegetables. Here, in fact, the principal portion of the food of the monks was produced, and they all assisted to cultivate it. The cattle in the park were likewise theirs, although they were vegetarians. But their duties were not ended when they had catered for themselves. Sometimes they had many visitors, and every day, according to our driver, they fed a multitude of the poor people of the district, for neither rich nor poor were ever sent empty away. They helped the sick—Father Leo himself was a doctor—and fed the hungry, and provided for the needy, for they remembered the words of the Master: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

Long and earnest was the conversation which we had with the good monk as, under his direction, we explored this little world of sacrifice and sanctity; and eagerly he sought to explain to us the doctrines of his holy church; and, when he found that we were ready and willing to recognize the loftiness of many of its tenets, he grew quite eloquent in vindicating the remainder. While I

have never been disposed to regard the dogmas of the Romish Church with that stubborn prejudice and deliberate misunderstanding which appear to be the normal attitude of the majority of Protestants, and have always seen that, beneath the splendour of its ceremonials, and the grandeur of its music, and its incense, and its altar-lights, there was a deep and beautiful meaning ; that most of its doctrines were at least as sensible as those of any other church—which is not saying very much, perhaps—I had never before imagined that those doctrines were capable of such a lucid and logical interpretation as they received at the hands of Father Leo. His was not a blind devotion. He was able to give a reason for the hope that was within him ; and, in spite of the cowl upon his shoulders and the monkish garb he wore, his mind was broad, his sympathies were keen, his every word and action evidenced his earnestness ; and, whilst it is not very likely that his prayer that, as we recognized the reasonableness of some of the articles of his faith, so we might ultimately come to accept the remainder, will be realized, I shall always remember his intelligent face and his enlightened arguments with respect and pleasure.

Before we left, he accompanied us through the

park, and out at the gates, to the Lady's Retreat.

"I thought you were not allowed to leave the grounds," I casually remarked, as we passed into the road.

"Such is our regulation, but we must exercise common sense in these matters," said he, in tones of mild rebuke.

On entering the house, he enquired for the lady who superintended it, and asked her whether she would have any objection to our looking through.

"Certainly not!" she answered courteously; and so he led us into two or three luxuriously furnished rooms which contrasted strikingly with the simplicity of the apartments at the Guest House in the park, and, indeed, only resembled them from the fact that, on brackets and tables and mantelpieces, were images, and crucifixes, and sacred pictures, and pretty volumes of meditation; and then, proceeding upstairs, we visited the bed-rooms, all of which were elegantly furnished, but in none of which was wanting some tender token of the Holy Mother and the Holier Son.

In one apartment there was a small but handsome altar; and, in another, a certificate which indicated that the old lady by whom it was occupied, and who was residing here for a time

in order to devote her thoughts entirely to religion, was a member of the Order of the Sacred Heart of Jesus—that heart which, pierced and bleeding, figured often in the emblems and the pictures on the walls. *We* were but transitory visitants, animated by a passing curiosity; but many tarried here, or in the Guest House through the gates, for days; and priests and people often devoted their brief holidays to this quiet life of service and meditation.

The entertainment at these Trappist monasteries is free to all, and when we offered Father Leo a donation to the funds of the Order, for the alterations which were contemplated, and the large-hearted regard of the brotherhood for the destitute and sorrowful, must involve a heavy expenditure, he would only accept it after much persuasion; and he left us with warm wishes, and a kindly hand-shake, and many expressions of regret that we must needs depart so soon.

The mysterious Order to which these monks belonged was founded in the middle of the twelfth century at La Trappe, in Normandy. The abbey there belonged to the Cistercian monks, but its discipline had degenerated into laxity, and at last it was reorganized on an

extremely rigid system by a certain Count de Perche. The regulations which he prescribed were, however, gradually disregarded, and when, about 1662, the abbey was conferred upon the famous Armand Jean le Bouthelier de Rancé, they had almost fallen into desuetude. The new abbot had formerly lived a life of gross profligacy, but had been converted to a Christian course of conduct by the tragic death of a favourite mistress. He was a man of resolution and ability, and he set himself to reform La Trappe, and instituted the stern system of discipline which prevails in the Trappist monasteries to the present day, and of which we had just seen and heard something for ourselves. In 1663 he proved his sincerity by entering anew as a novice. The next year he took the usual vows, and was reinstalled as abbot. By force of will and character he triumphed over the opposition of the monks themselves, and over all other difficulties ; and, during his life, the Trappists flourished, and he himself was honoured by many with an almost superstitious reverence. The Revolution dispersed the brotherhood, but many found refuge at Valsanite, in the Swiss canton of Freiburg. War drove them thence to Augsburg, to Munich, and ultimately to Lithuania. In 1816, however, they

repurchased their old monastery, where they number about 200. They have established themselves in various other localities; but their influence is now inconsiderable; and, in spite of their devotion, the Order is doubtless doomed to gradual decay as ideas broaden, and we come to see that it is not in the "great cloister's stillness and seclusion," but amid the stress and turmoil of the outer world that men may imitate the Master best.

Among our last words on leaving St. Joseph's had been an enquiry as to whether we should be permitted to visit the Convent which had been pointed out to us at Roscrea. He aswered doubtfully, declaring that the nuns were of a very rich community, and that he was not sure whether they would admit Protestants at all; but that he thought, in any case, they would probably object at this early hour of the day, as their morning arrangements might not have been completed, and they did not allow any one, Protestant or Catholic, to see the Convent except when it was in a condition of perfect order. But we were anxious to look at the place, and all that he had told us only served to whet our curiosity; and so we determined to make the attempt, and requested our driver to convey us thither.

The Convent was a long white building approached from the road by some steps ; and, mounting these, I rang the bell. In a minute or so I heard the door opening, and an old and smiling nun appeared and eyed us in silence. I explained the object of our call, and she then informed me that they had painters on the premises, and that the Convent was all sixes and sevens, otherwise they would have had much pleasure in showing us what there was to see ; but, if we would enter, and step into an anteroom for a moment, she would speak to the Lady Superior, and ask her if we might see the Chapel. In the room to which she led us, there was a Visitors' Book, and on the walls the usual emblems of devotion were displayed. After a brief interval, a lady-like nun, with a very pleasing and intelligent expression, appeared, and, saluting us with great courtesy, led us to the Chapel—a large, oblong room which was not particularly ecclesiastical in its architecture, except that, at the end, there was a handsome altar.

She then conducted us to the Schoolroom—a very fine apartment with a floor that was polished, and shone like a dining table, and desks, and forms, and all the usual appurtenances of a large

academy. The nuns, it appeared, belonged to a Teaching Order, and educated some fifty young ladies, and about two hundred of the children of the poor, the latter free of charge.

Our conductor expressed her regret that, under the circumstances, she was not able to show us more of the interior of the Convent; and, indeed, the ladders and the scaffolding of the painters were visible in the halls and on the handsome staircase as we passed; but, still following her, we found ourselves in a pleasant garden, with shady walks amid the trees above the belfry tower, and, in another portion of the grounds, a multitude of flowers, and, among them, a hedge of fuchsias, and stalwart troops of gladiolas, with their flaming swords extended in the morning sun, this being a flower which was, she said, from its bright colours, very useful for purposes of altar decoration.

She expressed the strongest admiration for the monks of St. Joseph, and spoke with deep emotion of the hard, austere life which they led, and of the tremendous sacrifices they had made; for some of them, she said, had been rich and eminent, with all of happiness that life could give in prospect; "and yet," she added, "if our

holy religion be true, there is not any sacrifice which we can possibly make which is too great." She did not say anything of her own sacrifices, but there were tears in her eyes as she spoke of the sacrifice of the Son of Mary, and in His service she was satisfied.

"People think," she added, almost echoing the words of Father Leo, "that ours is a gloomy and a wretched life, but there never was a greater mistake. We are all very happy!"

She was a large-minded and warm-hearted lady. There was not anything of bigotry in her nature; but she regretted that Protestants had such a misconception of Catholic doctrines, and thought that the better they knew and understood each other the less their differences would become; and she seemed to have a tender trust that friendly discussion and intercommunication would one day banish all the ancient bitterness. I could not choose but bless her gentle heart and kindly face, and, as I listened to her earnest tones, and saw the dew within her ardent eyes, my own grew wet with sympathy.

Before we left Roscrea, we had time to ascend the great ruinous oblong tower of the Castle, up many awkward steps, and along queer passages, with breaches in the walls through

which we gazed into great depths of crumbling masonry, and, in the yard beneath us saw, a dingy and deserted-looking barracks. From this elevation there was a fine view of the town, with its gray ruins and its neat white streets; and, girding all, a ring of green and brown and purple slopes, diversified with trees, and dotted with white cottages, and, to the east, the sunny outlines of Slieve Bloom.

At about half-past eleven, we started for Limerick, calling, among other places, on the way, at Nenagh, the circular donjon of a ruined castle visible above its clustering homes. During a considerable portion of the journey, a range of blue mountains was conspicuous upon the left. These were the famous Devil's Bit Mountains. Their greatest altitude is 1572 feet, and they derive their name from a little break in the continuity of their singularly flat and even summits which is supposed to resemble the incision which a yokel might make in a round of bread, and is attributed to the powerful teeth of his Satanic Majesty, who, benighted and ravenous, is said to have taken a bite at the first thing available; but, finding the morsel difficult of mastication, to have dropped it in a neighbouring

county, where it forms the celebrated Rock of Cashel.

A young veterinary surgeon of ardent Nationalist proclivities joined us at Nenagh, and we speedily struck up an acquaintance. For the rest of the journey we conversed with him almost without intermission on the problem of the hour, our interest never flagging for a moment, for his intelligence was only equalled by his palpable sincerity and by the extravagance of the views he held. His feeling against landlord oppression was very strong, and he brought forward much evidence to prove how harsh, and exacting, and unjust the owners of the soil had been, and to how great an extent they were responsible for the poverty and the wretchedness of the country. At one place, he showed us a deserted copper and silver mine, which had been opened out by some speculative individuals and gave promise of abundance of ore. For a time, he said, it was worked with energy and success, and found employment for a large number of hands; and a village was springing up in the vicinity when the landlord, discovering the value of the property, raised the rent to such a degree that it became impossible to work it with success; and the mine had ever since been idle, and the

men for whom it had found employment thrown upon their own resources. Probably he might himself have acted like the landlord under similar circumstances. It is so much simpler to preach than to practise ; and so absurdly easy to be liberal with other people's money. He informed us, among other things, that he knew for a positive fact that the consent of the owner had formerly to be obtained before the sons and daughters of the tenants on an estate were allowed to marry ; and that he had even been known, in some instances, to demand, as the price of his acquiescence, a portion of the daughter's dowry.

Presently we saw a range of hills away to the right, at the back of which our companion told us that the village of Bodyke was situated ; and he went on to say that he had himself been present while the now notorious evictions were proceeding there, and to give us a graphic description of the gallant defence made by the misguided people ; of the army of policemen encircling the loop-holed huts which were guarded by the women with showers of boiling water and scalded meal ; of the spectators standing on the hills around, cheering the people and groaning at the police ; of the desperate struggle of the latter to effect an entrance—how,

with pick and crowbar, they had made huge gaps in the walls ; and how, time after time, they were compelled to retire discomfited. And then he told us how he had himself been fortunate enough to get within the ring of constabulary drawn round one of the houses ; and how several Englishmen were near him, excited spectators of the struggle ; how the forces of the law advanced, and battered at the wall until a breach was made ; and how, within the breach, a young girl stood, with flashing eyes and heaving bosom, " exactly like a tiger at bay," said he ; how a policeman lifted his baton, as if to strike her ; and how an English member of Parliament whipped a revolver from his pocket, as he saw the action, and, in a voice of fierce excitement, cried : " By G——, if he touches that girl, I'll kill him ! "

" Who was the member ? " we asked, our curiosity being much aroused by this circumstantial story.

" I will only say that he is very well known in England," he said, " and that I saw the incident with my own eyes, and was standing close beside him. I give you my word of honour that the affair occurred exactly as I have described it."

In answer to my questions as to whether Mr. Gladstone's Bills would have settled the

difficulty, he frankly admitted that the protective tariff which they denied to Ireland would be absolutely necessary to enable her to make headway and adequately develop her resources, and this against the rest of the United Kingdom, as well as against the outside world; and, when I asked him whether, if the Irish landlords were so bad as he represented, Mr. Parnell would have been able to bind the nation, as he claimed to do, by his acceptance of the Land Bill, under which they were to receive some twenty years' purchase of the original judicial rents, which he had since declared to be utterly unjust and oppressive —"Not at all!" he answered. "If the Bill had passed, we should have robbed you!" and, after this very unequivocal and straightforward admission, he went on to state that the price was absurd and exorbitant to a degree.

We now caught a glimpse of the Shannon, flowing placidly between the pleasant pasture-lands of Clare and Limerick; and presently we stopped at a busy station the platform of which was positively crowded with red-faced, brawny, active young peasants, all of whom carried hurling clubs, a species of weapon which is beginning to be used for other purposes than those connected with the sport which is so

popular among the people of the Rebel South ; for I saw, on my return, that, at some of the meetings which were subsequently held, the men who attended were armed with these hurling clubs, and presented a formidable phalanx of peasant warriors eager to defy the law. The land was moderately good during the greater part of the journey ; and the rain was falling steadily, restoring and reviving it, and lending to the fields their wonted garb of green, as our ride approached its termination, and we slowly entered the large and busy station of the City of the Violated Treaty.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CITY OF THE VIOLATED TREATY—A PLAGUE OF PUBLIC-HOUSES—IRISH HOSPITALITY—ON BOARD THE "VANDELEUR"—A CURIOUS ACQUAINTANCE—THE SCENERY OF THE SHANNON—FOYNES—TARBERT—THE RIVER BY MOONLIGHT—A PHENOMENAL HOME RULER—KILRUSH—A STRANGE ADVENTURE—A DIM PROCESSION—A LUNAR RAINBOW—THE LIGHTS OF KILKEE.

Limerick, the City of the Violated Treaty, and the largest place in the west of Ireland, consists of the old and the new town. The former is sub-divided into the English and the Irish towns, and the latter is known as Newtown-Pery, after the family name of the Earl of Limerick, upon whose property it stands. The old city was surrounded by a wall, isolated portions of which may still be seen, and it has borne the brunt of several seiges. The last of these were in the times of Cromwell and of William the Third. It is to the treaty consequent upon the latter, when, after many crushing repulses, the Orange Monarch

offered liberal terms to the besieged, that the City of the Violated Treaty owes its name. The terms were accepted by its gallant defender, Sarsfield, and the garrison surrendered to De Ginkell. The treaty was signed in 1691, upon a stone which stands upon a pedestal at the northern extremity of Thomond Bridge ; but, as in so many previous instances, the good faith of England was broken, and the terms conceded were shamelessly set at defiance.

Here we were to experience something of Irish good-nature and hospitality to strangers ; for, not content with having entertained us by his conversation all the way from Nenagh, our veterinary friend now offered to help us to solve a doubt which had been suggested by a young Yorkshireman in the train, of whom the reader will shortly hear again, as to whether the boat which was advertised to sail down the Shannon from Limerick to Kilrush at four was really running ; and not only to do this, but to endeavour to ascertain whether we should be able to land at Foynes on the opposite shore, from whence we should have been able to proceed at once by rail to Killarney ; or, failing this, to cross from Kilrush in the morning and get to Killarney the

same night. He also promised to show us round the city.

The result of his enquiries not being satisfactory, he took us to an hotel, where we left our luggage, and then led us through several fine streets to the quay, to prosecute his search for information there. The Shannon was not very wide, at this point, and the few vessels and steamers which were moored along the wharves or in the docks were of comparatively small dimensions ; whilst, across the stream, green fields were plentiful, the principal portion of the city being on the eastern side of the river. A little higher up the Wellesley Bridge crosses it, uniting Newtown-Pery with County Clare. Upon the bridge, which is one of the finest in Ireland, stands a statue to the memory of the late Lord Fitzgibbon, who fell at the Battle of Balaclava. Higher still is Thomond Bridge, already alluded to, connecting English Town with County Clare. English Town, is situated on an island, and is united with Irish Town by Baal's Bridge, erected on the site of another bridge of great antiquity ; and with Newtown-Pery by the Mathew Bridge, so called in honour of the great Irish apostle of temperance. The work of Father Mathew—great as it unquestionably was—appears to be

commemorated more by monuments than by permanent habits of temperance ; and it would have been amusing—if it were not so sad—to learn from *Dr. O'Dwyer, the Bishop of Limerick, that, in the city which has called a bridge after him, there are no less than 312 public houses to a population of 38,000, a larger number, in proportion, said the Bishop, than that of any town in the kingdom with the exception of Bolton. He added that, having regard to their respective means, the people of Ireland spent vastly more upon intoxicating liquors than the people of England ; and Mr. Hurlbert gives statistics which, if accurate, are more appalling still. He declares that Ennis, with a population of 6307, contains no less than 100 public houses ; that at Castleisland there are 51 to a population of 800 ; and that in Kiltimagh

* This is the courageous Roman Catholic Prelate who so resolutely insisted upon obedience to the Papal Rescript, one of the severest and most weighty censures of the Irish agitation which has yet appeared and who recently told Mr. Dillon "that if, at any time, I should find myself put into prison for a cause that I professed to believe just, I would rot there before I allowed my friends to send up a miserable whine for my release from every end of the country on the plea of health ; and that if I sneaked out thus, and then went off to the Antipodes on a twelve months' tour until the storm blew over, and my vows to defy the Act of Parliament under which I had been imprisoned were forgotten, you might call me a dastard without fear of contradiction."

every second house is devoted to the sale of intoxicating liquors. In the face of these figures it is somewhat singular to find the Irish members uniting with Sir Wilfrid Lawson in opposing by every means in their power the only honest attempt at temperance legislation which has been made for years. I commend the fact to Mr. Caine, if he has got over that "five-page letter" from Mr. Gladstone, "closely written," which seems to have turned the good man's head.

"The Vandeleur," the Kilrush steamer, was lying at the end of the quay, almost the lowest of the vessels alongside of it. From her funnel was issuing a smoke which was sufficient evidence that she intended to make the cruise; and, on enquiry, we found that she left at four, as advertised, but that she would not call at Foynes. As we doubted if we should be able to get across from Kilrush and on to Killarney the next day; and heard, moreover, that another steamer was going for a short trip down the river, we hesitated whether to proceed at once direct by rail to Killarney, or, at least, as far as we could get in that direction; to have a brief cruise, spend the night at Limerick, and journey thence to Killarney in the morning; or to see the river thoroughly, and take our chance for the subsequent portions

of the journey. Our friend was unremitting in his endeavours to obtain information for us, and to assist us in coming to a decision, and at last we resolved to go by the four boat.

This only gave us time to have just a glimpse at the city, which is cheerful and well-built, and contains many fine houses, warehouses, shops and public buildings. George Street, the principal thoroughfare, is long and wide, and flanked by edifices which would not be out of place in any city of the Empire; but, even here, there was something to indicate that we were in slipshod Ireland, where everything is either worn with age, or else unfinished or incomplete; for, in spite of its noble appearance, the road from end to end was little better than a mud puddle. Of the Cathedrals and the Castle, I cannot speak with authority, as we had not time to visit them; but I can say ditto to the remark of Mr. Thackeray that he "never saw a greater number of kind, pleasing, clever-looking faces among any set of people;" and that "as upon every car which passes with ladies in it you are sure . . . to see a pretty one, the great street of Limerick is altogether a very . . . animated sight."

Our courteous and good-humoured friend only left us when he had done all that was possible to

interest and help us, and exhausted, in our service, the greater part of the limited time at his disposal in which to transact some business he had in the city before proceeding to the residence of his parents, eight or nine miles away. Thither he warmly invited us to accompany him, and we much regretted that our arrangements would not permit us to avail ourselves of his hospitable invitation. A kinder and a more unselfish man I never met; and, among the crowd of Irish faces which rise up before me as I write, there is not one that I remember with greater pleasure than that of this genial veterinary surgeon. He had, by the way, been educated at Edinburgh, knew some friends of my own, and, in spite of his Nationalist sympathies, declared that he liked Englishmen better than any other race with which he was acquainted; and that, during his college life, invariably, in any escapade, the English and the Irish students stood side by side, and backed each other out through thick and thin, there being in each of them an affinity—a mixableness—a fellow-feeling which he said that he found to be lacking in the Scotch character.

But now we had not only to leave our veterinary friend, but to say farewell to Limerick and its unpaved streets, and numerous public-houses, and

red-hot patriots, and pretty girls; for the "Vandeleur" was thronged with passengers, and her crew were casting off her moorings and making ready for the start. Under a drenching rain, we glided out into the river, swiftly dropping away from the gloomy vessels which were unloading coal at the quay. Concerning this, a fierce dispute was raging. The dock hands had been brought from Waterford to supply the places of the Limerick men, who had gone on strike because the merchants, anxious to effect a saving of labour and to stimulate local commerce, had introduced steam cranes, a course which it was altogether too much to expect a free and independent Nationalist community to tolerate. A similarly foolish spirit was manifested a little later in an ineffectual attempt to boycott the "Vandeleur," because her owners had permitted her to carry a police force from Limerick to Kilrush on the occasion of a Crimes Act prosecution, and afterwards to convey the prisoners and the police to Limerick. The vessel was, however, so necessary to the dwellers on the Shannon that the notices which were posted in West Clare, announcing the edict, had failed to have the desired effect.

The majority of the passengers were sheltering

in the saloon; but, amply protected by my macintosh, I stood upon the upper deck, and watched the disappearance of the masts, and the bridges, and the warehouses, and the seven towers of the Castle, and the spires of the churches, and the old Cathedral, whence, in the time of the siege of the city by De Ginkell, one of its best gunners had directed the firing of a cannon which is said to have wrought havoc in the ranks of the invaders.

And then I turned to gaze upon the low, green, muddy banks of the somewhat muddy river, and to chat with a seedy and disconsolate-looking young fellow who was standing beside me, and whom I had almost taken for a tramp. Hasty impressions, however, are often unreliable. He was, I ascertained, a Mr. B—, the son of a landlord, and an ardent Loyalist. I also learnt that he was a medical student, and that he had been a college chum of one of my own townsmen, himself a native of Kilrush. The slovenly attire of my new companion was largely the result of poverty, and this poverty was largely the result of the fierce and protracted agitation which has brought starvation, ruin and misery, not alone to the tenants who refuse to pay their rents, and, as in

England, get turned out in consequence of their default; but to honest, hard-working people who dared to discharge their lawful obligations; and to landlords who have been reduced from the mansion to the workhouse by the ingenious devices for breaking tthe Eighth Commandment which commend themselves to the mind of Mr. Gladstone as the only resources open to a down-trodden peasantry the last of whose "religious and social grievances" he told us that he was removing eighteen years ago.

Small wonder that my companion was bitterly opposed to Home Rule and the Nationalist party. In the toleration and the virtues of the Catholics he professed his utter disbelief, declaring that the Protestants, who were numerous in Limerick, would be glad if they could abandon the country altogether, and "leave them," said he, "to stew in their own juice," probably along with Sir William Harcourt. Of the English democracy his opinion, like my own, was not of the most flattering character; and I quite agreed with him when he said that they are, in the main, fickle, ignorant, and incapable of appreciating anything except their own immediate interests, or the plausible catchwords of some fluent orator; but, when he said that he thought that England's day

was over, I could not choose but differ from him, in spite of the dangers and the difficulties which beset the dear old land, and the blindness of the multitude to whom she appears to have somewhat prematurely entrusted her fate.

At intervals, he would pause in his remarks to point out to me some ancient castle or stately mansion, or to narrate some curious legend, or impart some interesting item of current information. He showed me, on the left, at the extremity of the estate of Lord Emly, the venerable Carrig o' Gunnel, or Rock of the Candle, with the ruins of a castle destroyed by De Ginkell upon its lofty summit; and he told me that a light was sometimes visible in the vicinity which could not be attributed to natural causes; and that, whenever this light appeared, the heir of the estate was doomed to die. Chatting together, we passed Adare, the seat of Earl Dunraven, and Bushey Island, and Scarlet Tower and Beigh Castle, each of them built to warn vessels to avoid the rocks on which they are situated. On the Clare side of the river, we saw the woods and castles of Cratloe, and, further on, the castle of Bunratty, used, I believe, as a constabulary barracks.

The stream had gradually widened, and, as

it widened, its colour had slowly changed from a greenish yellow into an exquisite dull pale green, which assumed a rich variety of shades as cloud and sunshine struggled for the mastery, the sunshine triumphing at last, and flinging, broad and beautiful, from shore to shore, a double rainbow, dazzling in its mystery of hues, and rich as some stupendous archway built of gems, and leading to the palace of the genii, the purple gloom of distant hills contrasting with the glittering river and the radiant bow. At intervals, low islands dotted the water, and woods and mansions fringed it, or ghostly ruins gazed upon it from the dusky strand; and, presently, its boundaries were lost awhile upon the north, for here the river Fergus flows to meet it from the fields of Clare, the point of junction lying at the end of a great, broad gulf bestrewn with pleasant islands.

At Kildysart, on the right, a noted place in the annals of the agitation, we paused to pick up the occupants of a boat which had rowed out to meet us. Here Colonel White has a fine seat. And presently, in spite of previous information to the contrary, we stopped at Foynes, a pretty island just in front of it, and, on a hill behind, a cross to the memory of Lord Monteagle, whose stately

residence was close at hand. No words of mine can give the reader any adequate conception of the beauty of the river. Alternately it shrank and broadened; flowed by purple hills, or laved delightful pasturelands and woods of infinite variety. Anon the clouds hung blackly over it, their murkiness relieved by transitory arcs of rainbow, which came and went a score of times; or pierced by yellow shafts of fire, or rolling suddenly away to grant us glimpses of divinest azure, or transmogrified to every fleeting shade of white and gray and gold; and, as the sun set, all the western sky was tinged with the palest, purest, most ethereal green, which seemed to be reflected from the green and glistening bosom of the lordly stream; and, ere the glory vanished in the west, the Sovereign of the Night arose, and peered above the congregated clouds, and then, emerging brightly from their folds, flung on the river all the magic of her smile, and traced upon its restless waves a heaving path of silver fire; whilst, from the land, a lighthouse flashed its steady beam across the waters, and then the shores grew dim and dimmer, to finally approach again, and still disclose delightful parks and mansions glimmering beneath the moon.

Near Tarbert, we passed the mansion of the

Knight of Glin. He had, it appeared, incurred the disapproval of the local Nationalists, and was at present boycotted. To such an extent did they carry their ill-will that they declined to allow the Regatta to be held until his name was removed from the Committee. Truly, "the resources of civilization are not exhausted!" At the village, there was another lighthouse. Here we slackened speed once more, and a considerable number of passengers joined us. Among them were several car-boys, who were in the habit of going down to this place by the morning steamer from Kilrush, in order to be able to intercept the return steamer, and thus forestall their comrades in the town. The young Yorkshireman whom we had met in the train to Limerick was on board, and, as both he and my landlord friend, Mr. B——, were going to Kilkee, and we had finally determined to do the same, and to spend the week end at that remote little watering-place, th e four of us agreed to share a car. Mr. B——, who was acquainted with nearly all the car-boys, and appeared to be fully familiar with their methods, accordingly arranged with a young fellow to convey us to our destination, which was eight or ten miles beyond Kilrush. His family had, he told me, visited Kilkee for

more than twenty summers in succession ; but, during the last year or two, they had abandoned these annual visits, owing to the fact that the agitation had reduced their means. To this I also attributed the circumstance that he had travelled over the greater part of Ireland on foot, usually putting up at some wayside hut or rude little inn, and attired in a garb so humble as not to excite any suspicions concerning his motives or any exaggerated estimate of his means. This amateur-vagrantish method of travelling had given him a keen insight into the peculiarities of the Irish character, and a budget of legends and a store of facts which made him a most interesting companion.

It was a joke to watch the importunities of the car-boys. They approached us all in turn, and exercised their utmost powers of persuasion to induce us to allow them to drive us to Kilkee ; but upon Mr. B—— they lavished an attention which was quite exceptional, exhorting him, with many witty sallies, on hearing that he had chosen his man, to remember them the next time he came.

By this, however, we were approaching our destination : the Tarbert light was growing small, and twinkling in the distance like a star ;

but the light on Scattery Island, opposite Kilrush, was throwing its rays across the river, and, to the right of it, two vivid flames appeared, which were only a few feet above the level of the water. The nature of these we could not at first discover, but we presently found that they proceeded from the quay. Here we were to have a further experience of the Kilkee car-boys—an experience which neither of us will readily forget. But, as yet, we were chatting with our fellow-passengers, and gazing at the lustrous moonbeams as they danced upon the dusky waters. Among the persons with whom I had conversed was an Irish sailor, returning from the West Indies, who did not think that Home Rule would do *him* "iny good, inyhow;" but who vigourously cursed the landlords, denouncing them as the cause of nearly all his country's ills, and expressing it as his opinion that, if the British Parliament would only buy them out, and thus get rid of them entirely, this would be better than Home Rule. Meantime, Mr. Richardson improved "the shining hour"—moonshining— by button-holing a young Irish doctor who was on his way from London to his home in Clare for a holiday; and was not only a Home Ruler, but a gentleman and a reasonable being.

He strongly condemned the proposal to sever Ulster from the rest of Ireland, and did not appear to be overdone with admiration for any of the proposals of Mr. Chamberlain.

At last we had to cease conversing and hunt up our baggage, which our car-boy had long ago taken out of the saloon and carried on deck. To discover it was a task of some difficulty. However, I managed to espy my own ; but we were now drawing close to the quay, and Mr. Richardson's search was still unsuccessful, whilst the car-boy himself did not appear to be able to give any information upon the subject. The picture that presented itself as we slackened speed and slowly neared the landing-place was singular in the extreme. The mouth of the river seemed, in the darkness, to be blocked by the dim form of Scattery Island ; and all the land was dark and ghostly save in the spot where the lights of Kilrush were visible immediately to the right of us ; and where, on the very verge of the quay, two battered old watering cans, which had been filled with oil, emitted, from their respective spouts, the fierce red flames which had excited our speculation as we sailed along the river, and cast curious shadows on the water, and on the swaying multitude who thronged

the deck of the "Vandeleur." The quay was packed with car-boys, who carried long whips, and whose eager faces looked positively weird in the red light. They beckoned, they yelled, they shouted, they pleaded, they threatened, they raged, they laughed, they shrieked, they struggled; and everyone of them appeared to be holding an animated conversation with some person on the steamer, and clamouring for permission to convey him to Kilkee; and, loud above the Babel, I could hear them calling out the name of Mr. B—. Every moment I expected some of them to slip into the river, or to fall to blows, or overturn the cans of oil that flared and flickered wildly at their feet; and, when the "Vandeleur" was moored, it looked, at first, as if they were going to rush aboard her in a body and take us by storm.

"Are you fellows ready?" said Mr. B—; "It's very late, and we've a long way to go!"

But Mr. Richardson was still vainly occupied in searching for his portmanteau, and a crowd was pressing round the luggage and hurrying in a confused and helpless mass towards the gangway, in imminent danger of falling overboard. We stood aside awhile and waited, but he could not find the missing article; and, at last, Mr.

B— suggested that he and I should go ashore and see that the car was all right, and that our companions should follow us as soon as they had succeeded in their search. With some difficulty we worked our way through the drivers. A stream of passengers was hurrying along the quay, where ropes were lying over which, in the darkness and the general confusion, it was a marvel that we did not stumble ; but we pushed steadily onward, and at length we reached the cars.

But such of the drivers as were standing here had secured their loads, and several already began to drive away. A crowd of disappointed Jehus were still, however, shouting on the quay, their cars and horses idle ; and Mr. B— and I having stowed our belongings in the well of the car he had selected, and our friends not having yet arrived, he proposed that I should go down to the boat to look for them. Accordingly, I left him standing by the car, and hastened back, never doubting that I should meet them; for the path was narrow, and bounded by a wall, and it seemed impossible that I should miss them. But on and on I went until I reached the flaming oil cans and the vessel's side. The deck was, by this time,

almost deserted, and the number of drivers on the quay had perceptibly diminished; but still I could not see a sign of Mr. Richardson and his companion, or learn anything whatever of them; and, to make matters worse, I found, upon returning, that Mr. B— had also disappeared. In vain I hunted among the cars, examined every one of them, and questioned their respective owners. I could neither hear of him nor find any traces of my luggage.

And now, the disappointed drivers who, as the last passenger had left the steamer, had hastened from the quay, were grown desperate, and their hoarse shouts and gesticulations were redoubled as their glances fell upon my unfortunate self.

"Want a car, sir? Jump up here; I'll drive ye to Kilkee! Come along!" cried a score of voices in chorus; and a score of lusty young fellows gathered round me, beckoning and clamouring in a manner such as I had never seen before.

"I've got a car!" I answered. "Have any of you seen Mr. B—?" relying upon his name amid the hubbub.

"Sure, he's gone long since!" said they. "Come along, sor! Here ye are! Git up! I'll take ye!"

"No!" I shouted, at the top of my voice. "We've already ordered a car! Which is Mr. B—'s driver?"

"Here I am!" yelled half a dozen at once.

"Bosh!" said I. "If so, where's my luggage?"

"Sure, Mr. B— took it on wid him, sor," said they, "and tould us to tell ye to drive along wid us, and he'd see ye at the other end;" and, as every assertion was promptly backed by a dozen or more of these excited mortals, I really began to wonder whether there might not be some truth in their statements; whether I had misjudged my new acquaintance, who was, of course, an absolute stranger to me; and whether he might not have made off with my belongings; or, at least, grown weary of waiting, and driven on, expecting, it might be, to fall in with us at the end of the journey.

In the midst of the confusion, and just as I was beginning to get angry at the persistence of the mob, although I hardly knew whether I ought not to take them at their word, and to be much puzzled and a little anxious as to the non-appearance of Mr. Richardson and our Yorkshire friend, I was greatly relieved to suddenly descry them in the thick of the throng, and to find that *they* had been looking for *me*. But this was not the time

for explanations. I could simply tell them that I had lost Mr. B— and *my* luggage; and then we had to exert ourselves to the utmost to withstand the importunities of the car-boys. The heart of a football scrimmage would have been peaceful and orderly by comparison with the rabble against whom we had now to struggle. Their object seemed to be to separate us, to bewilder us by their conflicting tales, and then, when we were about exhausted, to induce us, in our despair, to hire the nearest vehicle and escape the tumult at any cost.

We called for Mr. B—; we looked in every direction for him; we sought to maintain our footing, and to keep together; but the excitement, and the confusion, and the effrontery of the drivers increased every moment; it was with the greatest difficulty that we managed to avoid separation; and we had to resist our assailants in a manner which was rapidly becoming serious. We began to think that we should be compelled to fight our way out. We were each actually preparing, in our indignation, to resort to blows, and had clenched our fists in readiness for the fray which seemed inevitable when suddenly we heard a well-known voice. We looked up, and, there, on the skirts of the crowd, we could

just discern our missing friend, making, as best he could, towards us. Immediately, upon his appearance, the riot ceased, the throng fell back, and we were permitted to make our escape from a scene as strange as it has ever been my lot to witness.

Mr. B— had, we found, on noticing that I was a long time in returning from my search for my friends at the steamer, set out in search of me ; but had only succeeded in missing me exactly as I had succeeded in missing them, and had since been hunting for us high and low. The car was standing some distance up the road, my luggage was perfectly safe, and, in a couple of minutes, we had left the lessening multitude behind, and were rattling through the streets of Kilrush.

A glimpse of shadowy wastes of water, half reclaimed ; a barren stretch of gloomy bog-land, with here and there a white and lonely cabin looming through the mist ; a string of cars that glided silently up long and shadowy and lonely roads in dim procession ; a watery sky, with fleeting glimpses of the moon ; and, once, above the dismal undulations to the right, a perfect lunar rainbow, which curved across the dark and frowning heavens in a pale, weird arch that seemed to touch the zenith ; the

moon upon the left, her silver lustre mingling with the drizzling of the rain that came and went at intervals ; a humble cottage where Mr. B— dismounted, bidding us good-bye ; and then an extended crescent of white houses, with twinkling lights in many windows, and a little bay, and on its sandy shores great waves that crept in stealthy silence from the deep until they grew to monsters huge as those that ranged the earth before the Flood, and fell in thunder on the quivering shingle and expired, their manes of foam transformed to diamonds when over them the transitory lamp of Luna flung its beam—these were the pictures that presented themselves to our sleepy eyes in slow succession till the journey ended at Kilkee, and, in comfortable rooms, that opened out from long, low, mysterious and apparently interminable corridors, our weary senses found repose.

CHAPTER VIII.

I BREAK THE LAW AND THE SABBATH—WE DRIVE TO LOOP HEAD — THE CAVE OF KILKEE—CORACLES AND KELP—THE SAILOR'S GRAVE—THE BRIDGES OF ROSS—WE DINE WITH SOME PEASANTS—THE DRIVER AND "THE LAGUE"—MR. DAVITT AND "THE WHISTLER"—"WHERE IS THE BALANCE?"—A TALE OF OPPRESSION — A GENEROUS AGENT—JOHN BULL BLOWN UP.

We were staying at Moore's Hotel, a quaint and rambling place with much about it to charm the jaded traveller and bid him pause and rest awhile. It was rather late when I awoke, and, dressing hastily, I wandered along the shore, intent upon a swim, for Kilkee is a famous bathing-place. The white semicircle of houses, with the primitive promenade in front of them; the low rocks of Duganna, which stretched out into the bay from the south, and over which the waves were whitely curling; the sloping land to the north, with the level beach and the tranquil water, were all inviting, and I naturally anticipated a very

pleasant plunge. But, as I rambled calmly towards the vans, I discovered that all the bathers were ladies. A little further, however, I descried a second group of vans, and these, I concluded must be set apart for gentlemen. To my dismay, I learnt, on reaching them, and making enquiries, that they also were unavailable ; that gentlemen were only allowed to bathe up to nine o'clock ; that a penalty was exacted for any breach of this somewhat stupid regulation ; and that, after this hour, the fair sex were permitted to monopolize the beach, a privilege of which many were availing themselves.

"And cannot I have a dip anywhere?" I asked.

"Well, ye can bathe on the rocks there, away round the corner," said my informant, pointing to the rocks of Duganna.

"That is too far," I said. "I haven't much time to spare"—for we had arranged with our Yorkshire friend to occupy the day in driving to Loop Head. "Is there not any nearer place to which I can go?"

"Sure, and I think ye may go over by the breakwater yonder," said he, "though there are no vans."

And so I made for the breakwater, a stone wall which projected from the northern shore of

the bay, and within the shelter of which several of the long, clumsy canvas canoes, which are so largely used along this coast, were lying on the rocks, upside down. Here, though various persons whom I met, and who apparently resided in the scattered cottages which overlooked the beach from this point, eyed me with evident curiosity, I had my swim ; and greatly I enjoyed it, for the coast receives the full flow of the Gulf Stream, and the water was deliciously warm, although the air was chilly. A young lad was teaching a fine dog to swim on the other side the breakwater, and he also appeared to regard my proceedings with astonishment ; so, when I had finished, I approached him, and questioned him concerning the bathing regulations. He confirmed my information that gentlemen were not allowed to bathe after nine o'clock, and added that the rule was equally applicable at the spot where I had entered the water ; and that if the police had chanced to notice me, I should have rendered myself liable to a prosecution. However, the police were otherwise engaged, and so I was able to return to a good breakfast in safety, all the better for the exercise, and deducing from my adventure a lesson as to the advantages of early rising.

Towards eleven, the three of us, with a ruddy old driver, a good horse, a comfortable car, and a basket of sandwiches and drinkables, set out for Loop Head, following a sloping road from whence we had a pretty view of Kilkee, with its long, white, glistening crescent, and the lesser streets in the background, the inevitable Convent, white and extensive, a little inland, and the blue waves kissing the yellow sands beneath the esplanade.

Presently the Rocks of Duganna became conspicuous, and, over these, the water foamed and froliced wondrously, although the surface of the sea was calm. But those white breakers we so much admired were treacherous and cruel, and, only two days before, they had sucked three ladies from the boulders on which they were sitting, in apparent safety, and one of them had perished in their hungry jaws.

A trifle further on we dismounted to look at the famous Cave of Kilkee. It lay in a corner, a long way below us, and, at the entrance, guarding it, a rock crouched grimly, with a face as stern and dreadful as the visage of the Sphinx. The cave is sixty feet in height, at this point, and runs beneath the land as far as a tiny cottage nearly a quarter of a mile away. We

could not visit it because there was a swell upon the sea which made the task of entering dangerous in the fragile canvas canoes which are practically the only craft along the coast. They were very numerous. At many houses by the sea, and at others a long distance inland, we saw them lying in the fields, with upturned keels ; and we found that, not only were they used for fishing, but that the farmers needed them to pluck the sea-weed which they employed to fertilize the soil, and to gather the kelp, of which, at a later stage of our journey, we noticed considerable quantities. This kelp is burnt, and iodine obtained from it ; and the odour of the burning was, according to our driver, who spoke with the richest brogue imaginable, "the rattenesht shmell ye iver saw." The boats were so light that a couple of men could easily carry them whithersoever they listed. To me they looked supremely clumsy, and yet so frail that the slightest contact with the rocks would send them to the bottom ; but they were, I found, especially adapted to the nature of the coast. Evidently deep-sea fishing was neglected here, and, either from lack of boats, or of facilities for speedy transit to the English markets, a fruitful source of prosperity was almost wholly un-

developed. With extended railway accommodation, and better harbours, and the necessary capital, the peasantry along these western shores ought to be able to accomplish wonders. The Unionist party have shown themselves alive to this fact, and in practical legislation like that of last session have indicated how much more they really care about the material welfare of the Irish people than the party whose greatest dread appears to be that Irish grievances are getting exhausted, and that all that Home Rule could possibly do is being done without it.

On the landward side of the road we passed a Holy Well, and then we saw an island formed by the gradual crumbling away of the strip of earth which once united it with the shore. On every side the land was yielding to the monster who deceived us by his seeming smoothness, and was prone to roar and rave like some fierce beast of prey in places where the rocks resisted him. At the base of one of the cliffs, we saw the "Sailor's Grave," a spot where several men who had been wrecked in a storm reposed, the dread Destroyer doomed for ever to remorselessly roll forth their requiem. And, on a lonely crag, the crumbling fragments of Dunlickey Castle stood, the greater portion of it hav-

ing cracked and fallen in its hoary age, and yielded to the ravages of time exactly as the cliffs were slowly yielding to the thunder of the sea.

As we had left Kilkee, and gained the summit of the heights to the south of it, we had seen, far away to the north, the blue outlines of the Arran Isles, at the entrance to Galway Bay, and, on the coast, the grim Hag's Head, with the mighty cliffs of Moher upon its nearer side; and we were now approaching a place that was not to be surpassed in interest by anything in County Clare.

Dismounting again, we were at once surrounded by an army of barefooted juveniles, which rapidly increased as, under its somewhat superfluous guidance, we made towards the celebrated Ross Bridges. In front of us the cliffs shelved gradually to the sea, which, on the left, ran in between two precipitous walls of rock to form a deep and wide and rugged gulf, in which the greenest of waters shone translucently above a rocky floor. The gulf was crossed by a natural archway many feet in length, of uniform width, curving regularly from the base, and the top of it on a level with the cliffs it connected—the very facsimile of the broad stone bridges which cross our English rivers, except for the circumstance

that the rocks of which it was composed were rugged and jumbled in their arrangement. It might have been a bridge, in fact, the stones of which had been severed from the mortar and twisted into all imaginable shapes by the action of an earthquake, but which still clung together, in spite of the shock to which they had been subjected, and did not show the faintest sign of falling.

Walking over the bridge, which was entirely destitute of vegetation, we perceived that the gulf turned off at right angles after passing underneath it; and that, beyond the angle, it was spanned by another bridge, scarcely so regular in its proportions, one side of the arch rising from the water in a gradual curve—the other approaching the perpendicular; but, from the point at which we stood, the resemblance to a piece of human workmanship was even more pronounced than in the case of the former bridge; for the perpendicular side was underneath us, and almost hidden, whilst the sloping side was full in view, and as smooth as if it had been rounded by a mason's chisel. But the exterior of this second arch, unlike that of the other, was carpeted with the softest and springiest and greenest grass. It might, indeed, have been built for the behoof of some Goliath of a vanished age, and, instead of sinking, like the

Causeway, when it had served its purpose, remained to evidence the fact that "there were giants in the earth in those days," and, no longer trodden by their feet, to have yielded to the influence of sun and rain, and clothed itself in vegetation. Each of these bridges had been caused by the ceaseless washing of the sea, and another narrower bridge, much less symmetrical, was in process of formation.

But, extremely curious and interesting as the Bridges were, they were surpassed in beauty by the scene beyond them, for here the coast sloped down to the water in three smooth and even shelves, all of which were many yards in length, and all of which terminated opposite the spot where we were standing in a perpendicular wall which followed the slope of the shelves, until, like them, it was lost beneath the sea; or, to describe the place in a different way, the rocks ascended regularly from the water on the south and west, but ended abruptly upon the north; and, up each of the three slopes the breakers came like squadrons of snow-white horses, charging madly in the thickest of some deadly fray. For many yards they rushed and thundered in their wild career, and reached a height of many feet above the level of the quiet sea; and then their force

abated and their ardour died, and, broken into spray, they turned and fled, in utter rout and horrible disorder, whilst thousands, in their fury, flung themselves despairingly over the brink of the steep rocks to the north, and thence dropped, dying, to the deep again.

Breakers are a glorious spectacle anywhere, and waterfalls are always beautiful; but here the two were combined. There was the rude onset of the foamy billows as they climbed the steep and mighty shelves, and gained a height which seemed incredible; there was the sudden pause, and the snowy waters gliding backwards down the slope towards the sea; but, in addition to all this, there was the continual stream of water which, instead of stealing slowly down the slopes, plunged blindly over the ledges, to form three cataracts as dense as if some noble river surged upon the other side.

The crowd of ragged guides, all of whom appeared to expect payment, hung round us at every turn, and followed us from place to place in a manner which was positively annoying; and it was a relief to at last be rid of them, to mount the car once more, and drive along Ross Bay, which was shut out from us by a great wall of enormous stones that rose

high above our heads, and had been piled in this strange manner by the hand of Neptune, in his anger; for, dreadful as the breakers seemed to us to-day, they were as nothing to the waves that sometimes fume along the coast. During the previous winter, however, said the driver, they had risen to a height unknown for fifty years—we heard a similar story at Clew Bay—and, not content with bombarding the beach with mighty boulders, and hurling them to the very summit of the wall, they had flung them, in their fury, far beyond it, and sent them spinning into fields a hundred yards away.

Upon the road, we called at a hut to get some milk. Entering a large flagged apartment, in which a number of hens were sitting, we found the good man of the house, his wife, and their eldest son—a lad about fifteen—seated at a long wooden table at dinner; while several singularly bright and pretty little lads and lasses stood around it, bare-footed, rosy, clean and smiling, for on the table smoked a pile of potatoes boiled in their jackets, in the usual Irish fashion. And such a pile! It was, in fact, a perfect mountain of steaming "murphies." I recollect an Irish member once declaring that it takes thirteen pounds of potatoes per day to supply the nutrition

which is requisite to keep an average man in full health and vigour; and that, as no man can conveniently accommodate more than five, it was impossible for his constituents to thrive on such a diet. However this may be, it is certain that potatoes form a very large proportion of the food of the peasantry; and, whatever quantity they contrive to eat, they somehow manage to look remarkably well upon it. But, after the pile we saw in this particular hut, I refuse to set any limit to the human appetite. If the family in question were capable of despatching all the potatoes that smoked in front of them, philanthropy may make itself comfortable, for there must have been sufficient nourishment in that mealy mountain to sustain half the village. Moreover, in a pan before the fire of turf, some doubtful-looking cabbages were boiling; and on the table I observed, to my surprise, for this was quite a luxury, a piece of hot beef. But it was almost black, and so utterly scraggy and wretched as to be only fit for the windows of the cat's meat shop.

"The people don't eat much beef round here, I suppose?" I ventured to enquire.

"No, sor, divil a bit," said the father. "Thish is a bit ow a pace ow an ould cow that died, and not at all fit for gintlemin the likes o' ye. But

won't ye have a pitati? Sure, they're very nice. Take a sate, sor;" and he proffered to each of us a rude, rush-bottomed chair, which appeared to be suffering from a general break-up of the system, and was in the last stages of decrepitude. "Help yersilves. Ye're welcome."

"Will ye have a bit ow cabbage?" asked the goodwoman of the house, vieing with her husband in hospitality.

The cabbage was scarcely more tempting than the cow, at which, by the by, the children were gazing in mute appeal; but the potatoes looked wholesome enough, and we cordially accepted the invitation, our entertainers watching us with evident satisfaction as we munched away at the national vegetable, the pretty little daughters turning from the smoking joint to stare at us with large-eyed wonder as we questioned their father concerning the state of the country, and the son dividing his attention between us and the potatoes. They were the tenants of Mr. Burton, the High Sheriff of County Clare, who was one of the leading local landlords, and was at present engaged in a struggle with the Plan of Campaign. His demands appear to have been perfectly reasonable, and his character high; but a little incident will illustrate

the spirit in which the owners of the soil are commonly regarded here.

"Have you a good landlord?" I asked.

"Sure an' he's divilish bad, sor," said the son looking up from his meal, and speaking for the first time, his face flushed and his voice excited.

"Be quiet wid yez," said the father, reproving him. He's not a bad landlord at all. There's miny worse than him."

We did not hear of a great number of local outrages, but the driver told us of some recent cattle houghing, and, in the papers, we had often read of minor interferences with individual liberty in this part of Clare. The population of the Rebel South have, however, become so much accustomed to these lesser forms of lawlessness that they appear to think very little of them.

Our milk drunk, and our appetite for potatoes satisfied, we left this hospitable family, with tips and good wishes.

"Sure, an' those be very dacent gintlemin," I overheard the husband say to his wife, as he closed the door behind us; and, with this flattering unction to take to our respective souls, we proceeded upon our journey.

The driver was full of anecdote. He was, he said, a believer in Home Rule; but when I asked

him whether he was a member of the League, "Nat at all," said he. "Phat would be the use of me joining the Lague? Phat good has it done to the likes o' me?"

"I suppose you drivers will have suffered from the agitation?" I remarked.

"Sure, and we have," said he. It'sh not mesilf thatsh going to be afther paying two shillings a fortnight to the Lague. Before the agitation, there was scarce a day on pwhich I didn't drive some landlord or agent on my car, and they always paid me well; but they can't afford it now Miny of thim are gintlemin altogether. I've driven Captain Vandeleur, and Mr. Burton, and all the landlords in these parts; but they don't use the cars as much as they did, sor and, since the disturbance they're not able to pay the dhriver at all. And, as for the farmers, they're the shtingiest lot of rashcals ye ever met. A driver here has to dipind almost intoirely upon the tips he gets for his living, and itsh divilish little ye'll get from thim."

Speaking of the farmers, Mr. B—had told us, on the previous night, that a great change had come over their demeanour since the agitation; that formerly they had never failed to salute him with a courteous "Good-mornin', sor!" but that

now they often passed him without a word, or at most contented themselves with a gruff "Good-mornin'!" and he added, with a twinkle in his eye, that, latterly, he always addressed *them* as "sir," by way of irony.

To return to the driver. His opinions about the influence of "the Lague" appeared to be shared by most of the carmen of the neighbourhood, and he had much to say about a man whom he pointed out to Mr. Richardson, in my absence, on the following morning—a bold, witty, smart, dashing fellow who was evidently his ideal of what a driver ought to be. On one occasion, Mr. Davitt had visited Kilkee, and was holding forth to an enthusiastic crowd in the usual explosive manner, when this worthy, who had been standing not far from the platform, suddenly called out, at the top of his voice, to the distinguished agitator:

"I pray to God that ye may niver come down from that until ye're shtone cold!"

At this, the indignant mob turned round on him, and, seizing him by the throat, with many threats and much rough usage, hurled the fearless fellow from their midst; but his spirit is not exceptional among the carmen of Kilkee, and we were much gratified to read, soon after our

return, that they had held a meeting, and decided, by a large majority, to disregard the mandates of the local branches of the League, which had prohibited them from driving the police to evictions, and take the consequences, wisely determining that they themselves were the best judges of their own business.

The objection which our shrewd old driver had to paying his money to the League seems to have been amply justified. The Commission declare that, up to the 14th October, 1882, that benevolent institution had received over £100,000 of which no account had been furnished; that the "sack full of letters" which it received every morning were not forthcoming; that the bulk of its books and papers were withheld; and that "no valid excuse has been given for their non-production." I commend this fact to the notice of the Irish peasantry generally, and I submit for their further consideration the following extract from * "The Union" for the 11th January, 1890:

* "The Union," which has done so much to serve the imperial cause across the Channel, is now merged in "England." The two are published weekly, price one penny, under the title of "England and the Union," and statements on lines similar to the above are issued every fortnight.

THE NATIONAL LEAGUE BUDGET.

Public Plunder and Private Swag.

WHERE IS THE BALANCE?

From time to time we have in these columns given an analysis of the sums publicly acknowledged by the Irish National League in the Dublin press, together with the amounts accounted for. These latter for three years have consisted only of the money granted to evicted tenants. How the balance was expended is still a matter of grave doubt. Those who have the run of the till know best, and it is from them that the people of Ireland must demand a full account We give below the figures for the past three years, and it will be found that, owing to the Herculean efforts of Mr. Dillon in Australia, the total is more than that of last year by £4,000. The enormous sum of £105,521 has been received by the National League. Out of this the miserable, paltry sum of £20,824 has been spent upon relieving the sufferings of the Irish evicted tenantry. We are forced to conclude, therefore, that either there are very few evicted tenantry in Ireland, or else that the money of the National League has been devoted to the maintenance of Mr. Parnell's "kept party." A glance at the amount subscribed outside the United Kingdom will show that two-thirds of the amount subscribed, in every year, has come from America and Australia. Australia was selected as the best hunting ground for last year, and it will be seen that, instead of only £2,000 or £3,000, as in 1887 and 1888, no less than £11,629 was sent home by the mendicant

patriots of Ireland. We ask, what has been done with the balance of over £84,000? Where are the items? How much has been spent upon travelling expenses, hotel bills, newspaper subsidies, and office and management expenses? Before the new Defence Association gets hold of the money of the people of Ireland, the Parnellite leaders ought certainly to furnish a balance of the Irish National League's accounts.

1887.	Received.	Expended on Evicted Tenants	1887.
January to June ..	£21,079	.. ..	£2,853
July to December ..	16,838	.. .. ..	3,427
	£37,917		£6,280
1888.			1888.
January to June ..	£16,324	.. .. ..	£3,363
July to December ..	15,520	.. .. ..	3,754
	£31,844		£7,117
1889.			1889.
January to June ..	£12,260	.. .. ..	£4,042
July to December ..	23,500	... .	3,385
	£35,760		£7,427

Total received in three years	£105,521
Total accounted for	20,824
Balance unaccounted for	£84,697

Foreign Subsidies.

	1887.	1888.	1889.
America ..	£21,000 ..	£19,372 ..	£16,202
Australia ..	2,500 ..	3,150 ..	11,629
Africa ..	— ..	— ..	400
	£23,500	£22,522	£28,231

It is instructive to notice, on looking into these figures, that, whilst the American contributions have been growing less every year, the Irish contributions have fallen from £14,417 in 1887 to £7,529 in 1889, a diminution of about one half. Lord Randolph Churchill appears to have been correct when he stated that the League was "distinctly on the wobble." Nor is there much comfort for the "mendicant patriots of Ireland" in the figures of the Tenants' Defence Fund, which they launched with such a flourish of trumpets. A recent investigation shows that in not a single county in Ireland has the sum subscribed equalled the minimum amount demanded; and that, in Ulster, the League is so powerless that the people only contributed one-sixth of what was asked. Simultaneously with these revelations comes the news that the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union are about to organize every polling district in the country, and, north and south and east and west, assail the party which has too long been permitted to practically monopolize the municipal and parliamentary representation, and to claim a numerical preponderance altogether greater than our enquiries justified us in accepting as accurate.

Our friend had himself commenced life as a driver, and, having saved a little money, he pur-

chased the tenant right of a small holding from his father, and built a house thereon, worth, so he said, from three to four hundred pounds. But, at the same time, a dispute was pending between himself and the landlord of the property relative to his previous holding, on which he owed certain arrears of rent. Ultimately, it was arranged that he should discharge his arrears, and that the landlord, in return, should grant him a lease of the land on which he had erected the new house. The driver performed his part of the bargain, but the agent did not show any signs of proceeding with the lease, and invariably put him off in some way or another. Sick with hope deferred, worn out with the labour he had bestowed upon the place, lamenting the expenditure of his hard-earned savings, and afraid of losing the fruit thereof, for the landlord was able, then, if so disposed, to confiscate the whole of the tenant's improvements without any interference from the law, he one day met the agent, and accosted him with the same old question. (I give the dialogue in the driver's own words.)

"'When are ye going to get me my lase?' says I.

"'Sure, an it'sh the fault of the attorney,' says he.

"'Sure, and thatsh no rayson at all,' says I. 'If ye asked him to make out an ejictment notice, wouldn't he make it? And, if he can make that, pwhy can't he make out my lase? I'm getting weary and deshperate,' says I, 'and it'sh little I care pwhat becomes of me; and, sure, if ye don't give me my lase in a week from now, I'll shoot ye!'"

The emphasis and earnestness with which the old fellow narrated his story, giving full details as he went along, were almost tragic; and we could see that his blood boiled within him at the recollection of the injustice; but we little expected that the controversy would lead to a threat so terrible, and it was with more than ordinary curiosity that we listened for the sequel. Fortunately, the threat had the desired effect; whatever difficulty might have been raised by the attorney, it was promptly overcome; and, in a few days, the driver was settled in his new abode under a lease for a satisfactory term, and at a rent of £3. 10s. 0d. a year. He favoured us with other instances of landlord tyranny, remarking that the people in some parts, had been afraid to wear a decent suit of clothes lest the rent should be raised; and confirming the statement of our veterinary friend that, in time

past, the owner's consent was requisite to the marriage of any of the tenants on an estate ; but he said that he had never known a case himself of a landlord demanding a portion of the dowry as a condition of this assent.

He showed us one house, on the property, I believe, of Captain Vandeleur, concerning which he told a tale which represented the agent of that gentleman in a peculiarly favourable light. He had, he said, himself been driving him, and the agent, noticing the fine daughters of the house, and the industry of the farmer, and hearing that the daughters were going to America, said that they were a deserving family, and he would like to do something for them.

"Let me see ; how much per acre are you paying ?" said he to the father.

"Fifteen shillings, yer honour."

"Faith, it's not worth more than five," said he ; and when the tenant went into the Land Court, and the Commissioners were going to fix it at something like the old figure, he told them that it was altogether too much, and that the land would not pay it, and gave them an idea as to the true value ; and, as a consequence of the agent's own representations, it was reduced to ten shillings per acre.

The landlords of Ireland have much to answer for, in spite of the absolution which Mr. Gladstone was pleased to pronounce over them in 1881, before it became necessary for him to adopt and exaggerate every stale slander which Parnellite ingenuity has been able to devise to injure them and bring them to their knees. If the owners of the soil had been merely guided by the elementary principles of equity in their dealings with their tenants, the Land League, and the National League, and the cry for Home Rule would probably have never been heard of; and tenants would have been willing to live contentedly on their small farms, and to have accorded to the owners of the soil that respect to which a proper discharge of their duties would have entitled them. But, with rare exceptions, they neglected their opportunities. The law was on their side, and many, who were not naturally exacting or arbitrary, became accustomed to regard that which was legal as that which was just, and to act accordingly. To let a piece of waste land to a tenant, to permit him to cultivate it, and build a house upon it out of his own slender resources, and then to suddenly double or treble or quadruple the rent, or turn him from the farm, the value of which was the result of his

own labour, without compensation—these were everyday incidents over the greater part of Ireland, Ulster excepted—not confined to the properties of a few isolated despots, but freely practised by men who were regarded as above reproach; whilst scores of them scarcely ever visited their estates, and expended the money which they had wrung from the poverty-stricken populace in the haunts of English and continental luxury. All this is over now, a circumstance which every Separatist orator continually ignores, forgetting that his allusions to the injustice of the Irish land laws and the tyranny of the Irish landlords are either a deliberate perversion of the facts, or else a testimony to the utter incapacity of the statesman, who, since 1870, has devised three great Land Bills, each of which was to settle the question, and finally atone for the blunders and the cruelties of the past.

But this remedial legislation came too late, and even the Unionists, in their recent Act, wise and generous as it was, so far as it went—and Mr. Chamberlain, no mean authority on the land question, declared that it was "the most liberal and most generous" act "which has yet been offered to the tenants of Ireland by any Parliament either Liberal or Conservative"—did

not, in some respects, go far enough. English statesmen display a uniform and constitutional incapacity for taking time by the forelock. They do not move till they are forced to move. They do not legislate because it is just and right to legislate, but because they are afraid of a revolution, or anxious to win an election. To any impartial mind, the Irish land laws patently and flagrantly violated every principle of fair dealing; but it was not until the recollection of the wrong had eaten deep into the Irish character, and left memories which it will take generations to efface; and not until the Irish party made themselves a nuisance, and the Irish agitation a grave and imminent danger, that they took any real steps to effect a change. All parties have yet to learn that justice is justice, whether it is backed by 86 votes, or like a voice crying in the wilderness; and that injustice and tyranny ought to be abolished without the necessity for any agitation whatever. But the landlords and the Government alike were blind to all this; the one practised, and the other sanctioned oppression; each of them sowed the wind, and each of them has had to reap the whirlwind. Their concessions have been wrested from them through fear, and hence they have failed to satisfy the people,

and have led them to repeat and to increase their clamour; and, not content, as in the past, to resort to lawless methods to further legitimate ends, they are now resorting to lawless methods to promote ends which are equally lawless, dishonest and reprehensible. If the Unionist Government, or any other government, wish to succeed, they must "be just and fear not," removing every shadow of wrong from the law because it *is* wrong, and refusing to make any concession merely because its advocates are noisy and their methods unscrupulous. Statesmanship of such a character would be respected, and nothing under heaven could prevent its ultimate triumph; but John Bull has yet to realise that this is so, and not in Ireland only.

The driver thought that the true solution of the agrarian difficulty was to be found in buying out the landlords; that a fair average price would be fifteen years' purchase; and that the tenants would be willing to pay this.

Our Yorkshire friend was a very agreeable young fellow, but he approached the question with a strong prejudice in favour of the landlords, which was, perhaps, partially accounted for by the fact that a relative of his was the owner, so he said, of about ten thousand acres in

the neighbourhood of Lough Erne. His manner, also, was somewhat dictatorial. He had travelled over the greater part of Ireland, but he did not appear to be gifted with a large amount of tact. He spoke as if he knew more about the district than its own inhabitants; and his strictures on the conduct of the peasantry, and his assumption of superior knowledge, were manifestly irritating to the worthy on the box.

CHAPTER IX.

LOOP HEAD—ON THE EDGE OF THE PRECIPICE—THE DANGEROUS BRIDGE—OSCAR WILDE AND THE ATLANTIC—THE HANGING GARDENS—THE ESTUARY OF THE SHANNON—THE LIGHTHOUSE CELTIC IMPUDENCE—THE RETURN JOURNEY—A ROADSIDE DANCE—A BATTLE WITH A DOG—THE SECRET OF THE IRISH DIFFICULTY—A DANISH FORT—WHAT THE DRIVER THOUGHT OF THE PRIEST—THE STORY OF THE NUN.

Whilst we were conversing with the carman, we had driven past a multitude of scattered farms and neglected-looking fields, and were now approaching our destination. We dismounted at some distance from the extremity of the Head, and, taking our basket with us, made for a charming grassy elevation immediately overlooking some enormously lofty and almost perfectly perpendicular cliffs, with a small platform carved in a corner, and a ruined wall in front of it. Hundreds of feet beneath us the green waters rolled in from the bosom of the deep, dashed

against the base of the cliffs, crawled up their steep sides to a height which seemed incredible, and, baffled in their fury, slowly disappeared. It was terribly grand to peep from the tiny platform over the edge of this frightful precipice, and to hear the hollow rattle of the stones that we hurled into the water, some of which took no less than thirty seconds to reach it.

On a carpet of moss, that grew in endless knolls, like miniature mole-hills, and yielded to the feet like a spring-board, we spread our simple lunch, reclining, as we partook of it, at the very verge of the abyss, the sun above us shining goldenly, and the mighty waters thundering against the rocks below. We felt as if we could have spent the day at this delightful spot, watching the whiteness, and listening to the thunder, and thirsting for a

"Deeper knowledge of its march and mystery;"

but we had to tear ourselves away, for there were still the Hanging Gardens and the Lighthouse to visit, and the usual curse of unnecessary guides, elaborately directing us to places which we could not possibly have missed.

An old man, having caught a distant glimpse

of us, was now to be seen hurrying at full speed past the Lighthouse, as if to intercept us in our further progress. He was, however, far enough away; and we strolled along the great, mossy cliffs, and gazed across the broad Atlantic, and presently arrived at a rude wooden bridge marked "Dangerous," suspended half-way across a deep and awful chasm, which severed a small and lofty island from the Head. It had been intended to throw the bridge right over the chasm, thus affording access to the island; but this had not yet been done, and there it hung in mid-air, trembling with the weight of our foosteps; for, in spite of the ominous warning which confronted us, we were all rash enough to walk out to the very end, the sea foaming fiercely underneath us at a depth so terrible that the brain grew dizzy as we looked at it. The Head terminated just beyond the bridge, and right out in front was the broad Atlantic, flowing in unbroken majesty from the point at which we stood to the far-off shores of Labrador; the waterway betwixt two worlds, but washing, on either side, the shores of the same Empire—an "Empire of liberty, extending into every quarter of the globe."

Poor Oscar Wilde is said to have been "dis-

appointed with the Atlantic." Whether, when the great apostle of Æstheticism crossed its heaving surface, he was bilious, and whether sea-sickness had anything to do with his disappointment, I cannot say; but I fancy, if he had been with us to-day upon the ærial structure, stretching like an arm across the void, and seen the waters leap and flash, and change from green to white, and from white to opal as the sunshine fell upon them; and, if he had gazed upon the broad expanse of emerald that gleamed and glittered to the sky-line, with the fleecy clouds above him, and the balmy wind about him, and the mighty music under him, he would have changed his tune, albeit there are mortals in this world of ours whose souls "the glassy sea" itself would scarcely satisfy.

We next proceeded to the Hanging Gardens, dim dreams of Babylonish luxury floating through our minds as we trod the mossy carpet of unparalleled embroidery which Nature's hand has laid along this chosen haunt of hers. But when we suddenly espied the old fellow to whom I have alluded standing, hat in hand, at the top of some steps which went right down into the earth a couple of yards or so from the edge of the cliff; and, on peeping over it, found that the vaunted

Hanging Gardens were merely another narrow platform some feet below the spot on which we were standing, with another dilapidated wall in front, our disgust was extreme. However, we descended out of curiosity, and paused awhile to contemplate the scene which stretched in front of us. Opposite, but perhaps a dozen miles away, was Kerry Head, and, much further west, and at more than double the distance—right across Tralee Bay, which runs in between Kerry Head and that part of Kerry which terminates at the Blaskets—we could see the noble rounded outlines of the blue and lofty Brandon mountains.

Here "the lordly Shannon" ends its course of loveliness. And a lordly stream indeed it is. Rising in the far Lough Allen, two hundred and forty miles away, it flows through hills and vales and moors and meadows; swelled by the tribute of a thousand rills, roaring over cataracts, moving smoothly through deep, capacious channels, expanding into mighty lakes, or narrowing to some fierce rapid; overshadowed by dark forests, or kissing pastures pranked with daisies and thick with shamrock; reflecting the ruins of ivy-covered castles, washing the walls of ancient towns, or laving sunny villages, with quaint little houses and tiny churches on its smiling shores; throbbing

with pride as it cleaves itself a passage to the sea, and widening and deepening until a hundred navies could float upon its broad bosom, and, in the shadow of stupendous cliffs and lofty mountains, its individual being ceases.

By clinging with all our might to the wall of rock above the platform, and carefully planting our feet in the interstices, we managed to gratify the Briton's innate love of adventure by clambering back to the top of the cliff without utilizing the steps. We then proceeded to the Lighthouse, which stands in a field surrounded by a high stone wall; and were conducted over it by an obliging old keeper who had formerly been in charge of the lighthouse on the Arran Isles. The beacon which he at present tended is not very high; but, from the elevation of the promontory upon which it stands, it must be clearly visible far out at sea. The light is a "flash light," and the circular case surrounding the long glass tube in which the wicks are placed is set in motion by clockwork, alternately revealing and concealing the flame that is to guide the mariners upon their watery way. The keeper is never allowed to relax his vigil, and several times in the course of the the night he has to wind the ingenious machinery

upon which the efficiency of the light depends. There is very little traffic here, but none the less must the lamp be kept continually burning; and it would be difficult to exaggerate our indebtedness to the men who, through the dreary hours of darkness, often in infinitely lonelier spots than this, and with the hoarse tempest raving at the windows and the billows clamouring at the basement, see to it that, at every point of danger on the coast, these lights shall send their friendly message to the toilers on the sea, and tell them of the hearts ashore that beat in sympathy. A portion of the stump of an earlier lighthouse is still standing. It has been filled in with soil, and forms a fine platform from which to view the surrounding country.

As we were returning, a hulking old vagabond who was lounging by the gate which leads from the field, engaged in tending some cattle which were grazing within, condescended to open it, a feat which did not require the slightest dexterity, and which we were perfectly willing to perform for ourselves. At first, we took the action as an instance of the inherent courtesy of the national character; but, as the man was standing within a yard of the gate when we drew near, and as the service, if not intended as an act of courtesy,

was entirely gratuitous and unnecessary, we never dreamt that he would expect a sixpence for it, and hence we did not give him one. The result was that he cursed us to all eternity ; and, as we drove away, we could hear him calling upon heaven and earth to witness to this latest phase of Saxon oppression, and to be revenged upon the three wretches who expected a free and independent Irishman to push a gate open for nothing.

We drove home by a different route, following the Shannon for some distance, and passing Carrigaholt Castle, the seat of Mr. Burton, and several slated houses, which the driver pointed out as quite phenomenal in this locality. They were mostly occupied, he said, by Limerick citizens during the summer months ; and the situation was not without its charm, though life here must be pitifully quiet. There were, however, a good number of small hovels of the usual type to be seen, and we met many of the people in their Sunday attire, including lots of plump and rosy Irish lasses, who made eyes at us, and waved handkerchiefs, and threw kisses, and appeared to be extremely well satisfied with themselves and things in general.

John Bull will doubtless be greatly shocked to

know that, in his Other Island, only the earlier part of the Sabbath day is devoted to religious services by the Catholic portion of the population; and that the afternoon is occupied in out-door sports, political meetings and similar diversions. I read some time ago, by the way, that one of the notoriety-hunting English M.P's. who have lately been patting treason on the back, and applauding the men who snap their fingers at anything so unimportant as an Act of Parliament, his Protestant sensibilities being somewhat offended by the Sunday meetings of "the Lague," sought to appease his conscience and palliate the proceedings of his new allies by solemnly suggesting that all such meetings should begin and end with prayer. But what a pitiable farce it is to ask the blessing of the Almighty on a "criminal conspiracy," and to solicit the favour of Heaven on behalf of a body whose daily function seems to be to stir up "envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness."

At a rude stone bridge, we came upon a more attractive assembly than a meeting of the League —a gathering, to wit, of all the young people of the district to take part in a roadside dance. There was quite a crowd of brawny lads and buxom lasses, some of them with forms that would have

charmed the heart of Phidias himself. A man was fiddling as if his life depended on it, and the company were footing it right merrily as we approached. But our approach broke up the dance, and they parted, moving to each side of the road to enable us to pass. The interval in the revelry was occupied by love-making, some of the more coquettish of the lasses turning away from their admirers to temporarily bestow their smiles upon us. It was a pretty picture of Irish life, and we were much interested in watching the manœuvres of the dancers. We passed through them at a slow pace, and, in the words of the rattling old song :

> "The fiddler then began
> To play the tune again,
> And every girl did trip it, trip,
> Did trip it to the men;"

and, upon my word, we felt as if we should have liked to join them in their graceful exercise. They met in this way, it seemed, every Sunday afternoon ; and doubtless some of those strong young fellows would find, among those smiling lasses, a life-long companion, who would cook his potatoes for him, and probably grow them also, and be, in many instances, his better half through all the Sabbaths of his life until the final Rest Day came.

At another point we were attacked by a brute of a dog—the most vicious, determined, long-winded, blood-thirsty specimen of the canine race which I have ever had the misfortune to meet. He jumped at the horse, and made for the box, and sprang at our legs repeatedly in a singularly savage manner; and the whip of the driver and our respective umbrellas were plied unceasingly, but with little effect. All that we could accomplish was to keep him from springing on to the foot-board. We then tried to outrun him, and urged the horse forward at redoubled speed; but, fast as we went, the dog kept up, and, if he paused, it was only for a moment, to recover breath, and afterwards to return to the fray with added fury. I cannot tell how long this curious conflict lasted. We dashed past field after field, and house after house, and seemed to fairly fly along the road; but still the brute pursued us, never falling more than a few yards to the rear, and always coming up again with greater fierceness than before. We were simply amazed at his endurance, and his obstinate determination to assail us; and we were beginning to seriously wonder whether he were ever going to stop, and whether it would be possible for us to escape his

foaming fangs much longer, when suddenly another dog darted into the road from an adjacent cottage, and made straight for our pursuer. In an instant, he ceased his savage snarls, turned to the right-about-face, and ran as if for his very life. The speed with which he had followed us was as nothing to the speed with which he now fled from this unexpected adversary. Over banks and ditches and fields he rushed, the latter at his heels, and gaining on him rapidly; and we were in momentary expectation of witnessing a sanguinary encounter, when the two came to an abrupt pause on the top of a slight elevation on the edge of the horizon, and, instead of darting at each other's throats, looked as if they were about to fall upon each other's necks and register a vow of everlasting friendship. And then we lost sight of them.

The land through which we journeyed was not by any means of the best, but its barrenness was largely due to the wretched cultivation it received. Farm after farm was overgrown with rank and luxuriant weeds, and they were so vigorous, indeed, in places, that the crops were scarcely distinguishable. We saw one field of flax, the only one we had noticed outside the Loyal North. We also saw a field of bearded wheat ; but very little grain, especially wheat, was visible ; and, during the

whole drive, I scarcely noticed a single acre which bore evidences of really good cultivation. Landlords may be harsh and Saxons may be tyrannous; but, if both were blotted from creation, the people would continue to be poor and miserable and discontented if they did not exert themselves more to utilize their resources than they appear to do in County Clare. And Clare is not alone in its disgrace. All over Ireland, except in portions of Ulster, the same carelessness and thriftlessness and lack of energy are observable; and Irishmen have yet to learn that, with the most generous land laws that any statesmen on the face of the globe could possibly devise, the soil would still require to be tilled before it would yield its increase; and I have a shrewd suspicion, which the return drive did a good deal to strengthen, that Irish laziness has quite as much to do with Irish misery as English misrule.

Just before reaching Kilkee, we passed one of the old Danish forts which are to be seen in some parts of Ireland. It consisted of two curious circles of earth, the one within the other, each grass-grown, and each surrounding an inner level, grassy circle; and was a singular relic of the days when the hardy pirates from the north appeared

to add their quota to the story of Irish oppression. We also met a Catholic priest, of whom the driver, much to our surprise, spoke in terms which were anything but complimentary, asserting that, although he was well-off, "the ould rashcal was always after schrewing the money out ow the paple." As we came in sight of the town again, a sort of Sabbath quiet brooding over it, and saw the Convent in the distance, he made a second bull, in the same rich brogue and the same serious voice as before, telling us how, on one occasion, he was driving a nun; and how, just at the point we were passing, she suddenly fell from the car, "shtone cold." They carried her to an adjacent house, and we were expecting a graphic account of her funeral, when, to our surprise, he concluded his story by adding, "And sure, I often called aftherwards to enquire how she was getting on!"

CHAPTER X.

ANOTHER DANISH FORT—KILRUSH AGAIN—"THE PLACARDING OF ENGLAND"—WE VISIT SOME FAMILIES AT KILCARROL WHO ARE EXPECTING EVICTION—"THE BIGGEST DEFAULTER ON THE ESTATE"—THE BURTON DISPUTE—THE VANDELEUR EVICTIONS—SCATTERY ISLAND—"ST. SENANUS AND THE LADY"—THE POETRY OF MOORE—"LOOKING BACKWARD."

We were so pleased with the civility, the intelligence and the good-humour of our driver that we had engaged him to convey us, on the following morning, to Kilrush; and, at an early hour, we started, calling, soon after leaving Kilkee, at another and still more curious Danish fort than the one which we had seen as we returned from Loop Head. It stood in a field at some distance from the road, and consisted of a huge circular mound, several hundred feet in circumference, and surrounded by a wide moat. Both mound and moat were completely carpeted with grass. By careful crawling, I was

able to enter a small stone chamber which I discovered, and which was sufficiently dark and mysterious to explain the fact that the credulous peasantry imagine the place to be haunted ; and I could easily picture their consternation when, some years ago, a ventriloquist succeeded in causing wails and shrieks and other sounds of anguish to proceed, apparently, from the interior of the mound.

Kilrush, which we were now able to examine by daylight, is a busy little town, with several substantial streets,and public buildings. It contains some large corn stores, has manufactures of frieze, flannels and shirtings, and is the chief centre of the Clare fishery trade. It is also the centre of much lawlessness and disturbance, moonlight raids, boycotting and intimidation of various kinds being rampant in the neighbourhood. Shortly after our return, a parcel of dynamite was deposited in the greenhouse of a banker here for the somewhat unusual reason that he *refused* to evict a tenant who had incurred the displeasure of the local tyrants. The brother of this gentleman, curiously enough, presided, a few weeks later, at a lecture which I delivered in my own village upon our visit to County Clare. A

number of evictions were, however, in prospect, upon the estates of Captain Vandeleur and Mr. Burton ; and the driver had informed us, on the previous day, that he had heard in the town, on Saturday, that they were expected to begin immediately. The papers had, some time before, alluded to these evictions as impending, and had stated that preparations had been made by the tenants to resist them ; and it is extremely likely that, had it not been for the passing of the Land Act just as we were setting out on our journey, we should have had an opportunity of seeing them. But we had read, since our arrival, that the effect of the Act was, as we had apprehended, to postpone all evictions except those on title, and for farms where the rent exceeded £100 per annum, for six months, during which the tenants would have the opportunity of coming to terms with their landlords, or, in case of difficulty, of applying to the Court for its protection ; and hence we had discredited the rumour which the driver had communicated as to the early commencement of the struggle ; whilst he himself said that he did not think that the evictions could be going to take place just yet, or else there would have been more excitement in the air, and a much larger number of policemen in

the locality. We could not obtain any definite tidings in the town, and the little three-penny newspaper did not afford any information on the subject. If we had found that our interpretation of the Act was incorrect, and that the evictions had really been about to begin, we should have stayed to witness them; and, as it was, finding that we had some time to spare, and that there was not anything special to see in Kilrush, Mr. Richardson and I, leaving our Yorkshire friend at the hotel, requested the driver to take us to the houses at which they were expected, in order that we might converse with the tenants, and look at the preparations mentioned in the English press, but of which we could not learn very much upon the spot.

Our old friend was personally acquainted with nearly all of these tenants, and accordingly he drove us past the fine park and mansion of Captain Vandeleur to Kilcarrol, where a portion of the estate of Mr. Burton was situated. Opposite the park, we enquired of a man who stood at the door of his cottage as to when the struggle would start; but he repeated the report that all evictions were stayed under the new Act, though nobody seemed to really know whether this were so or not.

We found, from repeated conversations with the people we met, that not one in ten had any idea of the benefits which had been conferred upon him by that Act ; and that they were equally ignorant as to the effect of the Bill for the Prevention of Crime, the enormous advantages conferred by the one being distorted and minimised and misrepresented by the leaders of the League, and the effect of the other being grossly and scandalously exaggerated. Conspicuously posted on every police station in the land, we saw a notice of the Proclamation of the League. Would it not have been well if, side by side with this, there had been posted a short statement of the motives of the Proclamation, and the true scope and intention of the Crimes Act, which was simply to enable every man to go about his daily business without interference, and to have liberty to manage his own affairs in his own way ? And would it not be well if, whenever a large and generous Act for the benefit of the Oppressed is carried by the Oppressors—which happens, on the average, about once a year — the Oppressed should be made aware of the fact, and have the opportunity of discovering that the people whom they have been taught to hate are endeavouring to do all that they can to help them ?

It was suggested some time ago in "The Union" that England should be placarded from end to end with "a few plain facts concerning the Irish question," and subscriptions were invited to promote this object. Either because the requisite subscriptions were not forthcoming or for some other reason, the placarding has not, so far as I am aware, taken place, as yet; but the information which it was proposed to disseminate by this means is so important, and so little "understanded of the people," that I have pleasure in subjoining it, and thus doing what little *I* can to "spread the light." The "few plain facts" are these:

"1. An Irish acre is much larger than an English acre, viz.:—5 acres Irish, 8 acres English.

2. Rents in Ireland are not fixed by the landlords, but by Land Commissioners, most of whom were appointed by Mr. Gladstone.

3. An Irish tenant can sell his interest in his holding, and get from ten to twenty years' purchase of the rent. An Irish landlord cannot get ten years' purchase for the fee-simple of his estate.

4. Irish landlords pay all the tithes and half the poor-rates for their tenants.

5. Tenants against whom an ejectment is brought by their landlords for rent and arrears

"are given six months' grace before they can be compelled to give up the land.

6. Besides thus restraining the landlord's right of eviction, the ordinary power of all creditors to proceed against a tenant for a debt will be suspended when the Court is of opinion that his difficulties arise from no fault of his own.

7. Where, through no fault of their own, the tenants are at present unable to pay their rent, the Land Court may spread the liabilities over a period of years, so as to give the tenants time to meet their obligations by convenient instalments.

8. Whenever the prices of produce have fallen so much that the fair rent fixed by the Court is now too high, the tenant will be allowed an abatement corresponding to the fall of prices in the district.

9. To tenants who wish to buy their land the purchase-money is advanced at a low rate of interest.

10. More evictions of working-men take place in London in one week than of Irish tenants in a whole year.

11. Irish tenants do little or nothing for the working-men. Irish landlords used, before their rents were so much reduced, to be large employers of the working-men.

"12. Owing to the Parnellite agitation, more working-men have been murdered in Ireland than any other class."

I may supplement the above particulars by mentioning that the existence of arrears does not prevent a tenant from having his rent adjusted by the Commissioners; that leaseholders, as well as yearly tenants, are allowed to apply to the Courts for a reduction; that no tenant can be evicted unless his rent is twelve months in arrear, and that the tenant "who is so evicted must be * compensated for all improvements not already compensated for by enjoyment, such, for instance, as unexhausted manure, permanent buildings, and reclamation of waste land;" that a tenant may remain on his farm as long as he likes to pay the stipulated sum, which is subject to periodical revision by the Commissioners, and, having once been fixed, can never again be raised by the landlord; and that, under the Ashbourne Act, he can buy the farm outright by paying forty-nine annual instalments each of which is considerably lower than the

* If, however, he is evicted on title, after judgment obtained against him for the amount due, his interest in the holding may be put up to auction by the sheriff; but this is a remedy to which the landlord seldom resorts, and it applies equally to any other judgment creditor.

amount he now pays for rent. I need not mention how this privilege would, in the course of the present session have been extended, and coupled with the most liberal provisions for dealing with the chronic poverty of the congested districts, had it not been for the boasted "friends of Ireland" who have reduced a senate to impotence, and a session to barrenness; have thrust back the cause of temperance for a generation, and robbed the Irish people of the greatest boon which England ever offered them.

"Nowhere in Europe," says Mrs. Lynn Linton, in her useful, but slipshod, little book "About Ireland," "are tenant-farmers so well protected by law as in that country. . . . Nowhere else has such wholesale interference with the obligations of contract, such lavish protection of the tenant, such practical persecution of the landlord, been as yet demanded by one-half of the nation; nor, if demanded, would such partiality have been conceded by the other half." Irish tenants may, or may not, have got all to which they are entitled; but, at any rate, they have got more than those of any other civilized nation, and it is just as well that John Bull should know this.

And, if it is necessary in England to enlighten the public as to the effect of recent legislation, how

much more important is it in Ireland, where the people are led by the nose by the priests, the agitators and the press, that the true facts of the controversy should be brought home to them ; for, in spite of a decade of venomous misrepresentation, they are still inclined to reciprocate a kindness, and to appreciate any genuine manifestation of a desire to serve them.

The person whom we had accosted was a tenant of Captain Vandeleur, had paid his rent, and spoke of his landlord in terms of cordial approval ; but when, a little later, we dismounted from the car and made across the fields in the direction of a couple of houses which the driver had indicated, we came in contact with tenants of a different calibre. We were scrambling over banks and ditches towards the nearest house, and wondering what sort of a reception we should get, when a surly-looking dog appeared immediately in front of us, and, as his intentions were evidently scarcely more amiable than those of our canine adversary of the afternoon before, we gave him a wide berth, and turned through the fields to the right, intending to visit the other house.

As we entered the first field, by the same rough and ready process of scrambling, we saw a tall Irishman, slightly under middle age, standing at

the farther side, exactly opposite, and in front of his habitation, watching us with palpable misgiving. However, though we felt very much like trespassers, and did not know but that we might be mistaken for agents or bailiffs, and receive a warm reception, we pushed on, got within easy hail of the staring husbandman, and saluted him with a cordial "Good morning!" and, on his responding, promptly followed up the attack by informing him that we were English travellers, anxious to see as much as we could of the country, and, having heard that some evictions were anticipated in the neighbourhood, and that preparations had been made to resist them, had taken the liberty of paying him this unexpected call. He at once became extremely civil, and, when I told him that I intended to write an account of what I saw in Ireland, in the hope that possibly it might do some little to help the public to a better understanding of the Irish question, the attention and respect he showed us were astonishing.

"Sure, an' ye've come all the way from England, then," said he, "to shtudy the question on the shpot?"

"Sure, and we have," said we.

"Well, its mesilf thatsh glad to see yiz, gintlemin, and I wish ye a pleasant journey!"

"Thank you!" was our response. "Have you any objection to letting us look at your house?"

"Not the laste in the world," he answered. "Will ye kindly shtep thish way? The place is very rough, for we've been expecting to be turned out at iny moment for the pasht few weeks, and we haven't had the heart to look afther it at all, at all! Come in, sor; come in! Here are two gintlemin from England," he continued, turning to his wife, a tall and buxom woman of perhaps five and twenty; "they've come to see the counthry, and they want to go back and tell the paple in England all aboot us."

"Indade, and ye're welcome!" said she, in cheery tones. "Will ye take a sate?" and she set us a couple of chairs.

"Could you oblige us with a glass of milk each?" I asked.

"Certainly, yer honour;" and the good woman left the room for a minute, and presently returned with two glasses, which she proffered with much natural courtesy.

"How much will it be?"

"Och, nothing at all, yer honour! Phat do

we want wid pay? Faith, we're glad to see ye!"

I remonstrated, but she was firm.

"Well, here's a trifle for the children," I said.

"We haven't got iny," she answered.

"Well," I rejoined, not to be beaten, "give it to somebody else's children—to any of your young friends hereabouts;" and, after some hesitation, she at last accepted the gift on these terms.

"I suppose you will have had a good number of English visitors lately?" I said.

"Nat at all, sor," answered the husband. "Sure, an' ye're the firsht who have iver done us the honour to come and see us in our poor little place. It is a poor place, sor, ishn't it?"

Now, by comparison with an ordinary English farmhouse, it certainly was; but, by comparison with most of the Irish farmhouses we had visited, it certainly was not. The room in which we were seated was large, well flagged, and moderately well furnished, though a pile of potatoes lay upon the floor, and a number of hens were sitting, as per usual, at one end of it; but there was another room or two upon the premises, while the cattle, instead of being stalled beneath the same roof, were accommodated in pretty

good thatched outbuildings, quite equal to the *houses* of the peasants of Galway and Mayo. Moreover, the land was good, and several fine stirks were huddled together in the yard, but this was a perfect mud-puddle.

"You don't appear to have made ready to resist the evictions," I said. "We saw in the papers that great preparations were in progress."

"Oh, no, nat at all yit! We sha'n't shtart until the police come down to Kilrush," was the reply.

"Well, you can't do much at a moment's notice," I added.

"Och, the people come from miles around to hilp us, and we can barricade the houses and be ready in a very short time! We have been expecting the police for weeks, and they may be here iny day, yer honour."

"Have any of the tenants made preparations?"

"Well, there's a man at a house about a mile over beyant who has, I belave, done something of the sort; and some shmall priparations have been made on the Vandeleur eshtate; but I haven't heard of anything very much having been done, as yit. There's been some cattle-sazing going on, howiver, and some of the shtock upon the farm has been driven away to circumvint the

bailiffs. And, only yeshterday, on the farm we're crassing, the neighbours met and cut the crops, and carted thim away. All the fields are bare, as ye can see for yersilves"

"Where do you take the cattle?" we asked. "Don't the policeman follow them and claim them?"

He smiled, and gave us a look which indicated that it wouldn't do to tell; but we gathered, from a hint or two which he happened to let fall, that they were mixed with the stock of other farms in such a way as to render it practically impossible for the bailiffs to discover them.

It was easy to fill in the picture from these details—to imagine how, in the early morning, the blowing of horns and the ringing of bells would summon an indignant multitude to the scene of operations; how, "many hands making light labour," they would dig trenches round the houses, and roll huge boulders into the doorways, and block them and the windows with thorns, or boards, or trunks of trees; how the women would prepare great pans of boiling meal and water, and heavy stones and missiles, or even vitriol; and how the army of constabulary would approach, and, the sheriff having given his orders, attempt to force an

entrance through the doors or windows, only to be met by blinding showers of scalding water, or fierce volleys of stones ; how the women would be pushed into the forefront of the battle, and the infirm and the aged introduced to add dramatic effect to the spectacle; and how,from the top of an adjacent mound, and out of the reach of danger, some loud-voiced demagogue would occupy himself in applauding the actions in which he was too cowardly to participate, and urging the excited and ignorant peasantry to resist the law to the uttermost, and to incur any amount of peril and suffering in defending their hearths and homes,informing them that,if only he were in their position, he would perform prodigies of valour,and resist the minions of English tyranny to the last, meantime taking the most scrupulous care to keep out of their position ; how, badly bruised and scalded, in spite of their sheet-iron umbrellas the constabulary, after a prolonged and dangerous struggle, would ultimately manage to effect an entrance by making a breach in the wall, or removing a portion of the roof, or climbing by a ladder to an upper window in the face of a jet of vitriol; how the mad struggle would end in the only way possible, namely, in the defeat of the defenders ; and how, whilst they were marched off to prison,

the men who had urged them to this unfortunate resistance would calmly proceed to their hotel to extol their courage and make a good dinner; and to hold up to the execration of the *un*civilized world the men who, not less brave, had had their heads smashed, or the skin burnt from their faces, in resolutely obeying their orders, and endeavouring to perform their bounden duty. Fortunately, under the new Act, the individuals who incite the people to this resistance, as well as those who follow their fatuous advice, are liable to punishment, though some of them have a strong dislike to being treated in the same manner as their dupes. They object, for example, like good Radicals, to travel third class; they are heartbroken because the beards which their wives admire so much are cut off; and, sooner than wear the prison costume, they would sit in their shirts till the crack of doom or the arrival of a doctor's certificate. And these are the men whom Ireland delights to honour!

Our friend accompanied us to the house which we had previously avoided on account of the dog, and the owner of which enjoyed, we found, the proud distinction of being "the biggest defaulter on the estate." He did not appear to be a particularly bad sort of fellow, and, like our

conductor, was much interested on learning the object of our visit. His house was very similar to the first we had entered, roomy, and, for Ireland, fairly well constructed, with good outbuildings. This man had a family of young children, who watched us intently, as did the dog, whose mistrust was still sufficiently evident. Our first friend again called our attention to the poorness of the houses, and said that they were not fit for people to live in, appearing to be anxious to send us home with a tale of Irish woes which would lash the public into a frenzy against the landlords ; but "the greatest defaulter on the estate," whilst corroborating him in most of his remarks, stoutly contradicted him on this point, declaring that, with good seasons and a fair rent, the houses were all right.

We told them that, from all we could hear and read, they might make themselves comfortable for a time ; that the evictions were postponed by the new Act ; and that it offered enormous advantages to the tenants, if they chose to avail themselves thereof—advantages of which they were both profoundly ignorant. Asked what they considered a reasonable price in case the landlords were bought out, they said that twelve years' purchase was a fair average, though, in

some cases, the price ought to be as low as ten ; and that they believed that, if a scheme were drawn up on this basis, the tenants would be perfectly willing to abide by it. But what would the landlords say ?

Upon the farm was situated the Holy Well of St. Carrol. It was very little different from other wells ; and the water which it contained was not particularly limpid, but of course we had a sip, and felt ever so much the better for it. Close at hand were the crumbling remains of a small stone altar, which had, our comrades told us, been built by the priests in the ancient days of persecution when, "on hillsides and by hedges, the mendicant friars still preached the faith of their fathers in their fathers' native tongue."

The dispute upon this estate appears to have arisen because Mr. Burton had declined to comply with the modest request that he should accede to an all round reduction of 35 per cent. In consequence of his refusal, the Plan of Campaign had, as already hinted, been adopted, and was at present in full swing. But, for once, the agitators had counted without their host. With unflinching resolution, Mr. Burton stuck to his position, and the result was that the agitators received a signal rebuff. It was stated in the newspapers

that the matter had been settled by his accepting one year's rent in discharge; but I have a letter from him in which he informs me that this was false. "The report said," he writes, "that I had settled on payment of one year's rent and remittance of all arrears. The latter statement was altogether wrong, as I refused the last clause, and stood out and gained in the end, and, at present, I am being paid a lot of arrears. Of course I have occasionally to wipe off an arrear that may be hopeless to collect, and come to an understanding with the individual tenant. Out of the whole transaction I have not had to evict anyone as yet, but some were found to sell their tenant right." He adds that the "last collection has been more cheerfully paid than any for a very long time, except in one townland, which has the only firebrand of a priest out of the six priests and curates on the property."

The difficulties upon the adjacent estate, however, turned out to be more serious, and the evictions, which had been deferred, were subsequently executed amid scenes of considerable excitement. This Vandeleur dispute affords one of the most striking illustrations in the whole course of the agitation of the immorality of the Plan of Campaign, and the blind folly of the

people. Mr. T. W. Russell, M.P. visited Kilrush with the intention of getting at the real facts of the case for himself, and he gives, in "Disturbed Ireland," the fullest particulars as to the quarrel. One tenant, Margaret Madigan, owed seven years' rent up to March 31, 1887. She had a farm of 58 statute acres. The Poor Law Valuation was £61 15s. and the rent £63 per annum. The landlord was prepared to wipe out five years' arrears, or £315, and to take one year's rent up to 1886, minus 32½ per cent., leaving the rent for 1887 to be discharged at a later date. The house was barricaded, and boiling water was showered upon the police, and the British public reqested to believe that Margaret Madigan was an ill-used woman, Captain Vandeleur a heartless tyrant, and Mr. Balfour the brutal agent of an alien tyranny. Other instances are scarcely less striking, and Mr. Russell declares that, in the case of the 22 evictions which were executed at the time of his visit, the total amount due was £1889 10s. 6d. up to March, 1887; that the landlord offered to wait for the 1887 rent, amounting to £547 6s. 6d. on payment of the rent for 1886, less abatement, and to abandon all previous arears; or, in plain figures, to accept £401 8s. 3d. in discharge of

£1,342 4s. 0d. Had the tenants been sunk in the depths of poverty, there might have been some excuse for their default; but he declares that "not a single tenant evicted was unable to pay his rent. Not a single man failed to say that it would not . . . trouble him to pay;" and certainly, having regard to the size of the holdings we saw, the substantial nature of the premises, and the general air of comparative prosperity which was abroad, Mr. Richardson and I were disposed to come to the same conclusion. Mr. Russell adds that the people suffer themselves to be evicted, and sacrifice their interest in their holdings, not because they wish it, but "simply because they dare do nothing else. One tenant, who admitted he could pay his rent ten times over, said—I took the words down—'I could pay ten years' rent, but I should pay it dearly, for it would be with my life.'" "I never knew a case," he remarks, "where all the equities were so completely on the side of the landlord. They were not harsh evictions. . . These tenants were not poor wretched cottiers with nothing before them but the workhouse. They were not turned out in wintry weather. But for the Plan, they need not have been turned out at all. The work, unpleasant

and distasteful to police and soldiery alike, was carried out with judgment and humanity. No man could have been more solicitous than Colonel Turner to save property, and prevent any undue use of force. His spirit seemed to me to animate the entire party under his command." . . "Talk of combination, of the strong bearing the infirmities of the weak! It is nothing of the kind. It is sheer plunder. It is a revolution with cupidity as its base and dishonesty as its backbone ; and if all the priests of Clare stood, breviary in hand, to sanctify the transaction, this is the only verdict that can be pronounced by any honest man."

Ultimately the dispute was referred to the arbitration of Sir Charles Russell, Q.C., M.P., who decided that the non-evicted tenants should pay on the same terms as the evicted tenants had paid under the Plan ; that is to say, that non-judicial tenants should pay a full year's rent up to May, 1887, less 20 per cent. and half rates and taxes ; and that judicial tenants should pay a full year's rent, with allowances of rates and taxes as arranged by the Land Court, these amounts to be in full discharge of all rent in arrear up to March, 1887. This was surely an award sufficiently liberal ; and, in face of it, I was surprised to read, some little time ago, that about

thirty of the tenants had failed to carry out the arrangement which had been accepted on their behalf. Upon the whole, the opinion of Mr. Russell concerning the dispute does not appear to be greatly wide of the mark.

The Vandeleur Estate is typical of many of the estates upon which the Plan of Campaign has been inaugurated. In the majority of cases the tenants have joined it, not because their landlords were unreasonable, or their rents excessive, but because their leaders bade them, and they feared the consequences of disobedience; and not a few, as they have gazed upon their vacant dwellings, have mentally cursed the agitation in terms as emphatic as those of the woman who wrote upon the shutter of her dismantled dwelling:

> "We are evicted from this house,
> Me and my loving man;
> We're homeless now upon the world!
> May the divil take 'the Plan'!"

Our friends accompanied us down the small by-road at the end of which we had left the driver, conversing with us in a very frank and interesting manner on the way. There we found him in a considerable state of fidget lest we

should miss the steamer, and declaring that we should only just be able to catch it. But his pony was fleet of foot, and we hastened back by a shorter route, and soon espied, from the summit of a steep hill, the quay which had been the scene of our adventure two nights before, with several big mills and warehouses near it, and the vessel alongside, already crowded with passengers and emitting a dense column of smoke.

Bidding our quaint old friend good-bye, we hurried aboard, and, in a few moments, the "Vandeleur" started for Limerick. But our sail was to be comparatively brief, for we were merely crossing to Tarbert. As we left Kilrush, we had a splendid view of the famous Scattery Island, which, in the darkness and the excitement of our arrival, we had scarcely noticed. From its low, flat shores rises a magnificent Round Tower, a lighthouse, and a fort ; whilst, scattered over it, (probably this is why it is called Scattery) are said to be the ruins of Seven Churches. But the island is chiefly celebrated as the abode and burial-place of the woman-hating St. Senanus, whom Moore has striven to immortalize in a rhyming dialogue which I quote :

"ST. SENANUS.

'Oh! haste and leave this sacred isle,
Unholy bark, ere morning smile;
For on thy deck, though dark it be,
A female form I see;
And I have sworn this sainted sod
Shall ne'er by woman's feet be trod!'

"THE LADY.

'O father, send not hence my bark,
Through wintry winds and billows dark;
I come with humble heart to share
Thy morn and evening prayer;
Nor mine the feet, O holy saint,
The brightness of thy sod to taint.'"

The good man, however, appears to have shared the sentiments of St. Kevin, for we are told that

"The lady's prayer Senanus spurn'd;
The winds blew fresh, the bark return'd;"

though Moore has evidently a better opinion of him than he had of the murderer of fair Kathleen, as he adds that

"Legends hint that had the maid
Till morning's light delay'd,
And given the saint one rosy smile,
She ne'er had left his lonely isle."

It is astonishing how closely the name of Moore

is associated with the picturesquer parts of Ireland. Again and again the traveller is face to face with some scene commemorated in those "Irish Melodies" a pocket copy of which ought certainly to accompany every person who crosses the Channel. Not that I think a great deal of Moore's poetry. Indeed, it would be easy to discover, at the present time, say half a gross of poets who are head and shoulders above him in the art of minstrelsy. Perhaps the reason that Irishmen so much esteem his memory is because Ireland has produced so few poets of distinction, though perhaps a better reason than this can be found in the fact that "little Tom Moore" had a genuine love for his native land, and a warm sympathy with his countrymen in that oppression of which, up to and long after his time, they were undoubtedly the objects. He shows an almost prophetic instinct, however, when he says, in a letter to a friend: "How wise Scott was in connecting his poetry with beautiful scenery. As long as the latter blooms, so will the former." Had it not been that many of his own verses are connected "with beautiful scenery," I am inclined to think, that, in this age of "the survival of the fittest," they would have been doomed to an early death.

Keeping along the coast for awhile, we passed some extensive flag quarries, paused to pick up a Mr. Reeves, who was, we were told "one of the besht of landlords," and whose fine white mansion lay upon the left ; and then we glided out into the middle of the river and made for Tarbert.

The Wilds of the West, with their glittering loughs and purple peaks, had faded from us like a vision ; the Loyal North, with all its dying echoes of fierce feud, its gloomy glens and haunted shores, its smiling villages and cities thick with human life and enterprise, was left behind. The wonders of the Wicklow mountains, the peaceful hills that gird Roscrea, the moonlit abbey with its silent monks, the billows thundering against the cliffs of Clare had each, in turn, receded, and we were on the threshold of the last stage in our three journeys. Before us lay the poorest portion of the Rebel South, more dark with tales of blood than any region we had visited — more beautiful than Connemara, or the grandest parts of Donegal. Through the midst of lonely wastes where law was laughed at, and where Anarchy, like some fierce dragon, reared its horrid crest to heaven, we were now to travel to the sweetest scenes in

all the realm. And already, in imagination, we were standing in the shadow of Carrantual.

End of Part III.

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John Bull and His Other Island.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

PART I. (bound in Green) was published in April. It deals with the Wilds of the West, giving an account of a journey through the desolate province of Connemara, famous alike for the grandeur of its scenery, the wretchedness of its inhabitants, and the terrible crimes which have been perpetrated within its borders.

PART II. (bound in Orange) was published in June, and treats of the Loyal North, describing a journey to Gweedore, in the wildest part of Donegal, where some evictions were witnessed, and the acquaintance of Father M'Fadden, one of the most notorious priests in the whole of Ireland, was made. It will also be found to contain some startling particulars as to the Belfast riots, which were in progress at the time of the visit, and much information as to the scenery of Ulster and the opinions of its people.

PART IV. (bound in Pink) will be ready on the first of October, and will conclude the series, conducting the reader through the worst parts of Kerry to the beauties of Killarney and Glengariffe; and thence through "the Rebel City," and up "the Rhine of Ireland," to Mount Melleray, where another night was spent among the mysterious monks of the order of La Trappe. The volume will close with a Valedictory Chapter, summarizing the result of the information obtained during the three visits, and its bearing on the problem of the hour.

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Secretaries of Associations desiring to arrange with the author for lectures on Ireland and the Irish question, or other subjects, political or literary, are requested to communicate with him at the office of

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John Bull and His Other Island.

PRESS NOTICES OF PARTS I. & II.

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AND

HIS OTHER ISLAND.

BY

ARTHUR BENNETT.

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"Und'stand!" exclaimed Furlong; "I pwonounce the whole countwy quite incompwhensible!"

Handy Andy.

IV.

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JOHN BULL

AND

HIS OTHER ISLAND.

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CHAPTER I.

OFF TO THE LAKES—A QUESTIONABLE DRIVER—ANOTHER PROBLEM TO FACE—LISTOWEL—THE WORST DISTRICT IN IRELAND—THREE STORIES OF OUTRAGE—A CANDID REBEL—TRALEE—THE DOCTOR ON THE DIFFICULTY—THE MAN WHO "HAD TAKEN A DRAP TOO MUCH"—A RAP AT RACING—PARNELLISM AND CRIME: THE RESULT OF THE COMMISSION—"CLEARED"—"A VERY WICKED PEOPLE"—KILLARNEY.

When Mr. Richardson and I parted from the reader at the close of the last volume, we were crossing the Shannon from Kilrush, aboard the "Vandeleur," and making for the little town of Tarbert. Behind us lay the hills of Clare, with their abounding traces of the agitation; and before

us were the gloomy fields of Kerry, with their tragic memories, and all the wonder of the Lakes. Through the most disaffected portion of John Bull's Other Island we were about to travel to the most beautiful. We were to see the Rebel South at its best and worst.

Entering a little bay, we went ashore with our Yorkshire companion, who had, after some hesitation as to his arrangements, at last decided to accompany us as far as Listowel. Accordingly we hired an awkward car from a young driver who looked, to our thinking, remarkably like a moonlighter, and promptly set out for that place, passing, as we drove through the small main street, a number of artillerymen, a detachment of whom were encamped by the river. There was not much to notice here, and, beyond, the route followed a dismal moorland, dotted with farms, some of them extensive, but very wretched for the most part, crossing a river on the way. The journey was enlivened by an animated conversation with the carman, who might or might not have been a moonlighter ; but who himself informed us that he had formerly been on the Committee of the local branch of the League. Finding, however, that it didn't pay, and desiring to be free to follow the more remunerative

occupation of driving the landlords and their agents, he had explained to his brother-committeemen that he did not quite see how he could consistently pursue the two occupations at the same time, a decision in which—in a sudden fit of sweet reasonableness—they saw fit to concur, declaring that, so long as it was necessary that the hated classes should be driven, he might as well have the benefit of driving them as anybody else. As yet, he had not had his ears slit, nor did he appear to have otherwise suffered for his independence. This district, however, had been comparatively quiet, he said, save for some of the minor outrages ; but he called our attention to several houses along the road from which the tenants had been recently evicted. And not altogether without reason if many of the farmers resembled one whose residence he showed to us. This man, in spite of the fact that he owed five years' rent, was a constant visitor to the principal local whisky shop, and was in the habit of appearing there with a pocket full of money. As to buying out the landlords, the driver thought that fifteen years' purchase would be accepted by the majority of the people as a reasonable price, though many would not be able to pay it.

"But what guarantee have we, even if they

"could pay it, that they would abide by it?" I asked. "We fixed fair rents, under the Land Act, for a definite term, and everybody thought that this would settle the question; but, immediately prices began to fall, your leaders commenced to cry out that these fair rents were utterly unfair. What assurance have we that, if we made fifteen years' purchase the basis of the bargain, and farm produce continued to fall in value, you would not, in a couple of years or so, turn round on us and say that the price was simply monstrous, and that it was the height of tyranny to expect the tenants to meet it?"

"Well, sor," he said, "itsh there ye have me! I can't answer ye that at all!"

*The fact is, reduce the figure to the minimum that is practicable, and still we do not know but that, in a very short space of time, a hundred agitators, in every county in Ireland, would rise up to denounce it as a scandalous exaction, and devise new Plans of Campaign, not merely against rent, but against the very instalments of the purchase-money that was to make the soil their own.

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* I have just read in the papers that a meeting of the Duke of Leinster's tenants who were purchasers under the Ashbourne Act has been held at Kildare to agitate against the customary payment, which the tenants say that they cannot afford. The circumstance is suggestive

Would Mr. Gladstone's vaunted "union of hearts" stand the strain? And would a Parliament of O'Briens, and Dillons, and Healys be disposed to render us much assistance in enforcing our dues? And, unless we had taken ample precautions to enable us to compel the people of Ireland to carry out their obligations, would they not refuse to hand over to the Oppressor this periodic "tribute," and saddle us with say another hundred millions or so of a National Debt, or impose upon us the duty of a reconquest? These are not mere "details," which may be safely left to the ingenuity of Mr. Gladstone. Anything more absurdly inefficient than the scheme which he devised can scarcely be imagined. It was a positive invitation to the Irish nation to demand its independence; and it is only by the adoption of some such safeguards as have been suggested by Mr. Balfour that we can adequately protect ourselves against the possibility of repudiation.

Our friend was a Home Ruler, but he did not hesitate to express his opinion that a good land purchase scheme and the creation of plenty of employment for the people would do away with the necessity for it; and he was not alone in this. In fact, many of the people with whom we conversed held similar views; and I believe that, if

the peasantry were fairly tested, it would be found that nine out of every ten regard the matter in the same light, and that the agitation is animated more by the love of pounds, shillings, and pence than by a sentimental spirit of nationality. He had, he said, paid a great deal of money to the League, but he did'nt see that he had derived any benefit from it ; indeed, the agitation had done him and the majority of the labouring classes a large amount of harm, and the only persons who had received advantage were the farmers. These he described as "a silfish lot of divils," not caring for anything except their own pockets ; and he hinted very plainly that, when they were satisfied, if they ever should be, the labourers and shopkeepers would demand their rights—that there was another Irish question impending of a most difficult and serious character ; and that, if Mr. Parnell succeeded in obtaining Home Rule, he would at once find himself face to face with a body of men who had gained little and lost much by an agitation which was scaring capital from the country and destroying whatever employment the people now had ; and he confirmed a story which our Yorkshire friend narrated in reference to a certain landlord in this part of Ireland who had

been in the habit of spending over £20,000 a year in the district, but who, having displeased the League in some way, was one day met, as he was going to hunt, by the parish priest, and informed that he was not to proceed any further; and that, until he had complied with sundry conditions, which were named, the League had determined not to allow him to indulge in his accustomed sport. He heard the priest out, went home, made all necessary arrangements, left the country, and had never visited it since.

At last we reached Listowel, which is pleasantly situated upon the river Feale, and drove past a ruined tower, and up a long, clean, well-built street, to a large square, with two fine churches, one of which stood in the middle of it, the main street of the town running straight across the lower end of the square, and terminating opposite a good hotel. Here we lunched, and, afterwards, we sauntered slowly to the station down a side street, from which several other moderate streets diverged, and past the market, being pleased with the air of industry and cleanliness about the town, and struck with the number of respectable people upon the station platform. And then our Yorkshire comrade left us.

Beyond Listowel, we entered the most law-

less district in Ireland—the district to which Sir Redvers Buller had been sent in order to repress, if possible, that continuous series of outrages which had made Kerry a by-word. For miles around us, in all directions, amid those peaceful hills and gentle slopes and white cottages and winding roads, the sacred name of liberty had been systematically outraged ; and any man who dared to pay his dues, or to take a farm against the wishes of the League, had scarcely been able to call his soul his own. Shunned in the market-place, hissed at in God's house, the bread of life refused to him, his ricks fired, his cattle maimed, his windows riddled with bullets, his dwelling entered at the dead of night by armed ruffians who sought his blood—here, as in Clare, the law-abiding citizen had been in constant terror of his life, and a system of intimidation had been gradually established which was paralyzing enterprise, decreeing a death sentence upon common honesty, and trampling law and order under foot. For months the papers had been crammed with details of the outrages and crimes which have disgraced the locality, and I might exhaust a volume in recapitulating the villainies it has witnessed, the perpetrators of which, even when taken red-handed, sympathetic or terrified jury-

men have declined to convict. Let three suffice. They were told to us by an ardent young Nationalist in the train.

"You see that orchard?" said he, pointing to some trees and a house upon our left.

"Yes!"

"That is the scene of the moonlight raid upon—which I daresay you will rimimber. The police got to hear of it, and came up unixpictedly, and there was a shtruggle between thim and the moonlighters. One of the police was killed, and a man I know quite well was captured, and charged with the murther; but, though his share in it was established beyond dishpute, the jury dishcharged him, and he is shtill at large. I was wid him in the train the other day, jusht as I might be wid ye, and he says to me, says he, as we were passing thish place, and pointing wid his finger to the orchard yander, 'Sure, thatsh the shpot!' as good as admitting his own guilt. Faix, iverybody knows that he was guilty beyond all manner av a doot, but phat's the use whin the juries wont convict?" and there was, I fancied, in his smile, a scarcely concealed spirit of satisfaction at this failure of justice, and at the patriotism of this praiseworthy and memorable Nationalist jury.

At Abbeydorney, the second station beyond Listowel, a girl, he told us, had had her hair cut off for committing the unpardonable crime of speaking to a policeman; and, near Ardfert, he pointed out a long white road leading past a wood to the right of the line. Here it was, he said, that a series of shots had been fired, amid the darkness of the night, at Mr. Cecil Vandeleur, agent to Captain Oliver, as he was returning from Causeway to Tralee. They wounded the horse's neck, and penetrated the cushions, and entered the woodwork of the car; and some of them were fired from the side on which Mr. Vandeleur was sitting, evidently with the intention of taking his life, in which the miscreants who perpetrated the outrage wouldprobably have succeeded had he not promptly replied with a series of revolver shots, and had not the driver whipped the horse into a furious gallop, and thus enabled him to get beyond range. When men have to constantly carry firearms with them, and are liable to be potted at in the open roadway like this ; and when murderers, taken in the act, are calmly screened by perjured jurymen, it is surely time that something was done to vindicate the outraged majesty of the law.

This young Nationalist was very intelligent

and agreeable, in spite of his unpromising political opinions, and his visible exultation at the way in which the people had defied the authorities. Talking about Mr. Gladstone's scheme and the proposed modifications, he declared that, if that statesman carried out his illusory promise of excluding Ulster from the jurisdiction of the Dublin Parliament, the country would not accept the scheme ; but he said that he should not himself oppose the retention of the Irish members in the Imperial Parliament, for their exclusion would involve taxation without represention. As to whether he thought that Ireland would be satisfied without the power of protecting her industries, he said that, personally, he should oppose the granting of that power, as he was a strong free-trader ; and he declared that no one wanted separation ; that it would be unjust to Ireland; and that, if we gave her a fair and workable system of Home Rule, he would be ready to fight in the imperial cause "to the lasht drop of his blood," but not otherwise.

We left him at Tralee. And a fine town it is; indeed, with the exception of Dublin, and Belfast, and Limerick, and Londonderry, it was, I think, the finest town we had seen in Ireland thus far. The streets were numerous, the shops were hand-

some, there were many churches and chapels, of various denominations, including one of the most beautiful Catholic churches I have seen—situated just off the main street, and with a very tall, tapering spire of red stone, faced with white, the interior glorified by noble white pillars and gorgeous windows and altars—and a Franciscan Chapel at the lower end of the town, less attractive outside, but with a scarcely less beautiful interior. Tralee has also a good market, a courthouse, with a prison adjoining it, a customhouse, a chamber of commerce, an asylum, and barracks, and hospitals, and clubs, and nunneries, and newspapers, and some large and handsome shops, and a pretty park, and a ship canal, rather over a mile in length, and connecting the town with Tralee Bay. This canal accommodates vessels of 300 tons burden, and several were moored in the basin, busy discharging their cargoes, which appeared to principally consist of timber, hundreds of pieces of which were floating like rafts upon the surface of the water. Further down, we could catch glimpses of the bay, and of the noble blue mountains barring the horizon beyond it.

We had been enabled, by the courtesy of one of the leading local doctors, with whom we had

had the good fortune to meet, to walk down to the canal through the park, which is of a semi-private character, and stretches between the main part of the town and the basin. He took the trouble to fetch his own key and unlock the gate for us. A very pleasant place it was, with its soft green lawns, and luxuriant trees, and winding pathways, leading past a strange old ruin, and through a green field, to a sort of lodge, where a gateway gave egress to the quay, near which, and parallel to the canal, a small stream was moving lethargically seawards.

This doctor was just about as agreeable as every other Irish gentleman I have met, which means that he was as agreeable as it was possible for anyone to be; and I greatly enjoyed a long conversation with him on the scenery of Kerry, the customs and the graces and the follies of the people, and as to the true solution of the Irish diffiulty. He was, he said, in the confidence of both parties, his professional duties giving him exceptional opportunities of knowing exactly what were the opinions of every section of the populace. He told me a good deal concerning the national humour, and the frankness and the courtesy of the people; and I quite agreed with him that they were a particularly genial and attractive race,

although they had, he said, deteriorated greatly in all their best qualities since the agitation, and were lacking in that perseverance, thrift and energy which characterize the English and the Scotch. But he admitted that, in the past, they had been grievously oppressed, and declared that he knew for a fact that the stories which we had heard of landlords raising the rent because they happened to have seen the tenant wearing a new suit of clothes were absolutely true. He was himself, he added, both a Loyalist and a Nationalist, believing the two to be quite compatible. He had not any wish to see Ireland treated differently from the rest of the United Kingdom, but thought that a federal system would be the outcome of the present dilemma, under which each portion of that kingdom would have Home Rule in purely local affairs, coupled with perfect union for imperial purposes—local and imperial patriotism, and the perfect equality of each of the four kingdoms being thus recognized and attained ; "and," he added, "this is the opinion of nearly every intelligent person I know."

From a leading tradesman, I was surprised to learn that, even here, in the very heart of the most disaffected corner of Ireland, there were a

large number of Unionists, and that practically all the principal shopkeepers in the town were opposed to the policy of Mr. Parnell; but that the two sections of the population lived together on peaceable terms, and did not hear as much about the outrages as we heard in England. And I have been not a little astonished to learn since that the Tralee Habitation of so staunchly loyal an association as the Primrose League has no less than 1500 members.

In the course of our stroll, we observed two tall, fine-looking men with brown robes and cowls, and shaven heads, who were, said a bystander, intending, I suppose to be facetious, the Bishops of Limerick and Killarney. They were, in reality, I believe, a couple of Franciscan friars. We also had the opportunity of witnessing an illustration of the popular sympathy with lawlessness, for a fellow who was dead drunk had been taken into custody by a stalwart couple of policemen, and, in spite of his struggles, dragged off to the prison, a great crowd surrounding him, in the meantime, and passing all sorts of uncomplimentary remarks about the constabulary, one man ridiculing them bitterly because it "took two of thim to run in a poor fellow whose only fault, sure, was that he had taken a drap too much," a sentiment in which

the crowd so heartily coincided that I should not have been at all surprised had they attempted a rescue.

The remainder of the railway journey to Killarney led through similar scenery, and through a region equally notorious for outrage. Our only travelling companion was a very quiet, gentle, good-natured, respectable old man, who was not able to give us much information as to these parts of Kerry ; but who was one of the servants of Mr. Fitzgerald, agent to the Knight of Kerry, and was on the way to Cork, where the family had gone to see the races, which were to commence on the following day. These, had we had much spare time at our disposal, we should probably have visited ourselves ; but, as our doing so would have involved our missing either Killarney, or Glengariffe, or the Blackwater, any one of which was worth all the races that were ever run ; and as both of us preferred to watch the clouds chasing each other across a bright sky, or the waves racing over a blue sea, or the foamy waters leaping headlong into some immense abyss, rather than to behold "that noble animal the horse," as Thackeray sarcastically calls him—though, in truth, he is a noble animal—scudding over the turf amid the frantic yells of a

few thousand individuals who cannot lift their eyes above the manger, and who are more interested in the winner of the Derby than in the fate of an Empire—as, in short, without having the slightest objection to horse-racing, donkey-racing, or any other kind of racing, in its proper place, and for the occasional amusement of sensible people, we had the most unmitigated contempt for the extravagances to which the so many millions, "mostly fools," have pushed the sport, we preferred to go to Killarney, where the mountains were "perspiring," and the trees rustling, and the lakes glittering, and the arbutus growing just as usual, and just as if Cork Races had never been heard of.

There was a police hut at Gortatlea Station, the stationmaster being under police protection, on account of his having, in some way or other, offended the majesty of the League; and, from this point, a branch line runs to Castleisland, the inhabitants of which, said our old companion, were "a very wicked people," and which, by practically the unanimous testimony of the various people we asked, was the worst place in Ireland, not excepting even Ennis, which our Kilkee carman had declared to be "the wickedesht place on God's earth." "Sure," said he, "they'd think no

"more of shooting a man at Ennis than I would of shooting that pig"; and he pointed to an unsuspicious porker as he spoke. It would take pages to barely enumerate the atrocities which have occurred in the district of which Castleisland is the centre; and the recent history of this quarter alone is sufficient to prove to all except those who are blind because they will not see that Parnellism has led to crime. And this is clearly the opinion of the Commissioners, in spite of the hilarity with which, upon the publication of the report, Sir William Harcourt and his brother turncoats sought to cover their chagrin.

Let the public judge for themselves:

"1. We find," say the Commissioners, "that the respondent Members of Parliament collectively were not members of a conspiracy having for its object to establish the absolute independence of Ireland, but we find that some of them, together with Mr. Davitt, established and joined in the Land League organization with the intention by its means to bring about the absolute independence of Ireland as a separate nation. The names of those respondents are set out at page 32 of this Report.*

* Mr. Davitt, Mr. M. Harris, Mr. Dillon, Mr. W. O'Brien, Mr. W. Redmond, Mr. J. O Connor, Mr. Joseph Condon, and Mr. J. J. O'Kelly.

"2. We find that the respondents did enter into a conspiracy by a system of coercion and intimidation to promote an agrarian agitation against the payment of agricultural rents, for the purpose of impoverishing and expelling from the country the Irish landlords, who were styled the 'English Garrison.'

3. We find that the charge that 'when on certain occasions they thought it politic to denounce, and did denounce, certain crimes in public they afterwards led their supporters to believe such denunciations were not sincere' is not established. We entirely acquit Mr. Parnell and the other respondents of the charge of insincerity in their denunciation of the Phœnix Park murders, and find that the 'fac-simile' letter on which this charge was chiefly based, as against Mr. Parnell, is a forgery.

4. We find that the respondents did disseminate the 'Irish World' and other newspapers tending to incite to sedition and the commission of other crimes.

5. We find that the respondents did not directly incite persons to the commission of crime other than intimidation, but that they did incite to intimidation, and that the consequence of that incitement was that crime and outrage were

"committed by the persons incited. We find that it has not been proved that the respondents made payments for the purpose of inciting persons to commit crime.

6. We find as to the allegation that the respondents did nothing to prevent crime and expressed no bonâ fide disapproval, that some of the respondents, and in particular Mr. Davitt, did express bonâ fide disapproval of crime and outrage, but that the respondents did not denounce the system of intimidation which led to crime and outrage, but persisted in it with knowledge of its effect.

7. We find that the respondents did defend persons charged with agrarian crime, and supported their families, but it has not been proved that they subscribed to testimonials for or were intimately associated with notorious criminals, or that they made payments to procure the escape of criminals from justice.

8. We find as to the allegation that the respondents made payments to compensate persons who had been injured in the commission of crime, that they did make such payments.

9. As to the allegation that the respondents invited the assistance and co-operation of and accepted subscriptions of money from known advocates of

"crime and the use of dynamite, we find that the respondents did invite the assistance and co-operation of and accepted subscriptions of money from Patrick Ford, a known advocate of crime and the use of dynamite, but that it has not been proved that the respondents or any of them knew that the Clan-na-Gael controlled the League or was collecting money for the Parliamentary Fund. It has been proved that the respondents invited and obtained the assistance and co-operation of the Physical Force party in America, including the Clan-na-Gael, and, in order to obtain that assistance, abstained from repudiating or condemning the action of that party."

It is quite true that the specific charges against Mr. Parnell were not proved, and that Mr. Davitt's part in the agitation was, to some extent, explained and palliated by the peculiarities of his position; but, when every reasonable admission has been made, and when all extenuating circumstances have been considered, one cannot help but think that there remains a verdict dark enough against the League and its leaders:

"They never told the ramping crowd to card a woman's hide.
They never marked a man for death—what fault of theirs he died?—
They only said 'intimidate,' and talked and went away—
By God, the 'bhoys' that did the work were braver men than they!

"They only took the Judas-gold from Fenians out of jail.
They only fawned for dollars on the blood-dyed Clan-na-Gael.
If black is black or white is white, in black and white it's down,
They're only traitors to the Queen and rebels to the Crown.

"'Cleared,' honourable gentlemen. Be thankful it's no more:—
The widow's curse is on your house, the dead are at your door.
On you the brand of open shame, on you from north to south
The hand of every honest man flat-heeled against your mouth.

"'Less black than we are painted?'—Faith, no word of black was said;
The lightest touch was human blood, and that, you know, run red.
It's sticking to you fist to-day for all you sneer and scoff,
And by the Judges' well-weighed word you cannot wipe it off.

"'The charge is old?'—As old as Cain—as fresh as yesterday;
Old as the Ten Commandments, have ye talked those laws away?
If words are words, or death is death, or powder sends the ball,
You spoke the words that sped the shot—the brand is on you all.

"My soul! I'd sooner lie in jail for murder plain and straight,
Pure crime I'd done with my own hand for money, lust or hate,
Than take a seat in Parliament by fellow-felons cheered,
While one of those 'not provens' proved me cleared as you are cleared.

"If black is black or white is white, in black and white it's down,
You're only traitors to the Queen and rebels to the Crown.

"If print is print or words are words, the learned court perpends:
We are not ruled by murderers, but only—by their friends." *

Remembering the outrages of which I had read, I was not surprised that our old friend should, in grave and sorrowful tones, deplore the terrible state of the locality, and speak of its inhabitants as "a very wicked people." He added that his countrymen were miserably poor, and had suffered greatly in the past; but he did not think that Home Rule would mend matters, and said that all that was wanted was a really good, far-reaching, and final settlement of the land question.

There was not anything particularly picturesque upon the journey, nor was the poverty of the people at all comparable to that of the people of Connemara. The farms were, for the most part, very much larger, as well as more fertile; and, though they looked strangely poor to English eyes, they contrasted favourably with those in many other districts through which we had journeyed. When we found, at Farranfore, that the next station was Killarney, we began to expect something in the nature of scenery, and we were amazed to discover that the country resembled that through which we had travelled ever since leaving Tarbert, and was wholly lacking in any special charm. We were

* I am indebted to the "Scots Observer" for these scathing verses.

beginning to think that, like many other show places, Killarney was a fraud, when, all at once, we observed some lofty mountains to the right of us, and noticed that, along the line, a multitude of noble trees were growing; and, in a few moments, we were passing some large white buildings, and had slackened speed; and, almost simultaneously, we found ourselves at a substantial station, and it dawned upon us that we had reached the Home of Beauty:

"By Killarney's lakes and fells,
Emerald isles and winding bays,
Mountain paths and woodland dells,
Memory ever fondly strays.
Bounteous Nature loves all lands,
Beauty wanders everywhere,
Footprints leaves on many strands,
But her *home* is surely there.
Angels fold their wings and rest
In that Eden of the West,
Beauty's home, Killarney."

CHAPTER II.

AN INDEFATIGABLE WAITER — COMFORTABLE QUARTERS—A WALK TO THE TOWN—A CURIOUS SHOP—MR. RICHARDSON ENJOYS HIMSELF—A STRANGE STORY—WE LOSE OUR WAY—THE BURNING OF GLENBEIGH—A BRILLIANT METEOR—THE SILENT MANSION—THE LAKES BY MOONLIGHT.

But, as yet, we had not seen anything except a group of dim blue mountains, and a sudden abundance of vegetation ; and, whatever arrangements Beauty might have made, *we* intended to stay at an hotel. The question was, which ? We had decided, on the way, to try the Muckross, on account of its delightful situation near the Abbey and the Torc Waterfall; but, as soon as we stepped upon the platform, we were surrounded by a throng of touts, less numerous and violent, but scarcely less importunate than the car-boys of Kilkee ; and, among all this clamorous fraternity, we were not able to discover one whose hat was emblazoned with the name we wanted. However, pushing past these

gentry, and giving to each of them the stereotyped answer that we were going to the Muckross, we made for the entrance to the station, not doubting but that we should discover a 'bus from the hotel in question, in spite of the fact that several of our besiegers had told us that this was not so. Finding that they had spoken the truth, we paused to reflect a moment, and were instantly pounced upon by the representatives of half a dozen other hotels, each of whom solicited our patronage with much eagerness, and gave a most glowing description of the merits of his particular establishment. We were almost the only arrivals by this train, and, hence, we had to bear the full brunt of the attack, and were, by this time, getting moderately bewildered. But we were especially struck with the earnestness of one clean-shaven and bullet-headed-looking Hibernian whose hat bore the inscription "Lake View Hotel;" and, as this sounded tolerably, and as we had made up our minds not to stay in the town, we began to enquire of him concerning its situation, and whether he would be able to make the necessary arrangements to enable us to see both the lakes and the Gap of Dunloe upon the following day. We had never heard of the hotel before; but his

answers were satisfactory, and he gave a vivid account of the advantages of its position; and as, in the depths of his earnestness, he offered to drive us back to the town himself, free of cost, if we did not like the place, we were about to close the bargain without further delay, when one of the diminishing crowd that still haunted the platform said, in reply to our enquiries, that the Lake View Hotel was five miles from the lake. At this, we jumped to the conclusion that the bullet-headed gentleman was deceiving us, and told our tribe of advisers that we would not bother any more about the matter, but go to the Railway Hotel, which, at any rate, was close at hand. However, our friend at once renewed his solicitations, in more impassioned accents than ever. Had his life depended upon the success of his efforts, he could scarcely have been more intensely in earnest; and, instead of resenting the doubt which our conduct implied concerning his veracity, and telling us, like the man at Clifden, that "divil a bit did he care" where we went, he said, in a voice which would have been tragic had not the occasion been so extremely comical, "No, gintlemen, it is not five miles away at all! Belave me, I would not tell ye a lie! Ask the lady," he continued, turning

towards a solemn-looking personage who was seated in the 'bus. "Ask the lady! Indade, I'm telling ye the truth! I'll dhrive ye back mesilf, if ye don't like it! Isn't it quite close to the lake, ma'am?" he exclaimed, his eyes almost starting from his head in his extraordinary and unprecedented pertinacity. "Is it a nice place, ma'am, or is it not?"

Thus appealed to, the lady cordially corroborated him, and, attracted by his evident sincerity and unfailing politeness, and quite weary of a discussion which kept us from our dinner, we at last sprang into the 'bus and drove away. Amid a shower of rain we rumbled noisily through several good streets, and on down avenues of splendid foliage, which threw a gloom upon the road that was deepened by the leaden aspect of the sky; and then we crossed a stone bridge, in the shade of which a broad and shallow river babbled to the pebbles over which it flowed. But still we did not catch the faintest glimpse of anything in the nature of a lake, and were apparently getting a long way from the town. Presently, however, we ascended a hill, the road still shaded by innumerable trees; and then we turned abruptly to the right, through an open gateway, and, driving across a small field

where the new-mown hay was lying, and through a pretty shrubbery, we paused in front of a neat white building on the front of which were painted the words "Lake View Hotel." And now we saw before us, and below some intervening fields, the dark outlines of a large expanse of water, with dark, wooded islands dotting it at intervals, and dark and lofty mountains lying to the west and north, and, over all, a dim blue mist, and knew that we were gazing on the beautiful Lough Leane.

In an airy double-bedded room upon the ground floor, the windows of which looked right across the lawns to this enchanted region, we deposited our belongings; and in a cosy dining room we appeased our hunger. Rosy, buxom, and smiling domestics flitted about the passages; and our bullet-headed friend, delighted at the success of his solicitations and the vindication of his character, waited on us with all the assiduity which the most exacting individual could desire, and, in the course of the meal, informed us that he had arranged everything for the next day in such a manner as would enable us to see all that was most famous in the scenery of this celebrated spot before nightfall. In fact, the lines had fallen unto us in pleasant places,

and, that evening, we felt like Elijer Goff when he resigned himself to the tender offices of the sympathetic widow—as if we "didn't want tu dy." And I may say, at this point, on behalf of Mr. Richardson, as well as myself, that we have not, in any part of Ireland, been more perfectly comfortable or received so much unobtrusive attention as at this hotel; that its situation is delightful, and its terms moderate; and that its bullet-headed waiter is the most civil, the most obliging, and the most generally useful of any I have ever met. To the owner of the hotel, he must be a veritable treasure; and I here beg to offer thee, oh, bullet-headed one, our sincere apologies for doubting thee, and our hearty thanks for a score of unostentatious and cheerful services!

After dinner, we walked back to the town, a flourishing place with some six thousand inhabitants, some seventy-five drinking shops, a good supply of churches, a splendid Roman Catholic cathedral, several convents and monasteries, a court-house, a workhouse, a hospital, and a huge asylum. We visited the Cathedral "in the gloaming," approaching it by a silent path which led past the Bishop's Palace. The Palace was itself a stately building; but the

Cathedral, designed by the genius of Pugin, and celebrated for its imitation of mediæval art, was beautiful indeed. It covered a large area, and stood out magnificently as the moonlight fell upon its lofty gables and the low square tower which rises from its centre—still incomplete, alas! like some portion of nine out of every ten of the gorgeous tabernacles of the Catholic ceremonial which adorn the sister isle. The effect was heightened by the mass of foliage around the silent pathways, and the graceful monument which stands within the grounds.

The streets were almost deserted as we returned from our ramble; but, here and there, a fellow would be seen slowly sauntering homewards from the scene of his carousals, or a few laughing lasses gossiping together at the doors of the shops or houses; and we paused in front of the window of one of these to look at a highly coloured cartoon, which represented the Grand Old Man as frantically hugging Erin to his breast, and calling her the girl of his heart. I grieve to say that Erin seemed to like it, and to be quite oblivious of the noble Marquess who stood looking thunder and lightning in the background. Two of these lasses, happening to overhear our observations concerning the English master in the

art of blarney, suddenly accosted us with the question: "Are ye Home Rulers?"

We parried the question by asking whether they were, and hinting that, if they were not, we supposed they hoped to be, thus, by a pleasant transition, drifting from politics to matters connubial, and ultimately entering the shop, where it appeared that they resided, and in which it was possible to buy a paper, slake our thirst, and discuss the question at greater length. It was a curious establishment, but typical of a large proportion of the shops in the smaller Irish towns. Its walls, windows and counters were absolutely covered with cartoons from "The Freeman's Journal" and "United Ireland." Upon the floor, were sacks of meal and flour, and, on the counter, were bottles of Bass's ale and Guinness's stout, and miscellaneous eatables, and soap, and candles, and divers other wares which forcibly reminded one of the stock-in-trade of the Man in the Fustian Jacket. In this delectable establishment, the weary traveller might participate in "the feast of—*un*reason," represented by the literary garbage on the walls, and "the flow of"—well, *spirit*, represented by an abundant supply of whisky, to his heart's content.

We lingered rather long conversing here,

for Mr. Richardson appeared to be enjoying himself, and it always interested me to observe the ease with which he coupled politics and pleasantry, and the consummate art with which he combined his study of the Irish question with his study of the Irish female character. Whilst we were thus engaged, we noticed a blackguardly-looking fellow hanging about the door and listening to all we said, and he only shuffled off after a sharp reprimand from one of the aforesaid ladies.

"Where are ye staying?" the other suddenly enquired, in the hearing of this individual.

"At the Lake View," my friend incautiously remarked.

"Sure, and ye're not going all that way to-night are ye? Faith, an' ye'll meet the moonlighters!" she exclaimed.

And, indeed, this was not altogether improbable, for it was ten o'clock when we left, and around Killarney, in the previous winter, the freaks of the fraternity had reached their climax; and even the presence of Sir Redvers Buller, who had taken up his residence in the town, and sought to hunt them to their lairs, had not sufficed to wholly quell their grim activity. The streets were empty; but many doors were open, and, through the doorways, we could catch glimpses

of long, dark passages, leading to dim apartments far back from the street, with dark figures standing in the fire-light, or seated on the shadowy hearths, nearly all the front apartments being unoccupied, and nearly all the rooms which *were* occupied lying in strange out-of-the-way corners such as I do not remember to have noticed in any other place. We were both particularly struck by this feature of the architecture, and it vividly recalled an incident which happened in Killarney to an uncle of mine some twenty years ago. As he was walking out in the evening with two English friends and a Scotchman whom they had met at the hotel, the party were accosted by a talkative Hibernian who was lounging in a doorway in one of the leading thoroughfares.

"Good avening, gintlemin! It's a fine night!" said he.

"Sure, and it is!" said they, cordially reciprocating his greeting, and rather enjoying the prospect of a familiar chat with a genuine native.

"Is it from England ye are?" he continued.

"Ye've hit it!" they replied. "It's a beautiful country ye have hereaboots!"

"Bedad, an 'ye're right! Were ye iver here before?"

"No, this is our firsht visit to the Emerald Isle, and we hope it wont be the lasht ; for it's a charming shpot!"

"Ah, indade, gintlemen, and it is! I wish ye a pleasant journey! But shtep inside! Come up into my little parlour, and enjoy yersilves! Faix, an' its mesilf that's plazed to see yez!"

Not having anything better to do, and thinking this a good opportunity of witnessing something of Irish life, they readily assented. He led them down a dismal passage similar to those I have described, and with one or two doors along it ; and, on reaching the end, conducted them up some dismal, crooked, musty and mysterious stairs. The way was dark and full of windings, and they did not quite like the look of it ; but he eventually admitted them into an antiquated apartment with a cracked piano in one corner, and, in a few moments, left them to their own resources They looked at each other, and then laughed heartily at their strange host, and the curious quarters into which they had followed him. Perhaps a quarter of an hour had elapsed, when, wondering at his long absence, one of them sat down at the piano and struck up a lively, rattling air, the others commencing to dance, and talking and laughing as loudly as they could, with a view to

attracting his attention. At last he reappeared.

"Can ye get us anything to drink?" they asked

"Ah, to be sure I can, gintlemen! What would ye like?"

After a brief deliberation, they each ordered sherry, and he again left them. This time their patience was so severely tried that they began to grow suspicious; and when, after the lapse of nearly half an hour, he entered the room with four glasses ready filled, the Scotchman gave them all a wink to indicate that they had better wait a moment. As soon as the back of their singular entertainer was turned and the door was closed he cautiously exclaimed: "Don't drink the wine! I've tasted it, and I'll swear it's been doctored! Smell!"

This they did, and their suspicions were confirmed. Not one of them touched it. They resumed their music and dancing, and started a boisterous song, with a view to reminding their host of their presence, and making a speedy exit; for, by this time, they were getting mightily dubious of quarters so unusual and a host so unaccountable. They were on the point of trying the door and groping their way back down the labyrinthine passage, when they heard a faint creaking on the stairs. They

listened with hushed voices. Yes, there could not be any mistake about it ! Someone was stealthily ascending. Another moment, and the footsteps paused opposite the door, the handle was carefully turned, it was pushed quietly ajar, and the proprietor himself peered cautiously into the room. Instantly his eyes fell upon the glasses, still full to the brim, and upon the little company, all wide awake and intently watching him. No sooner had he comprehended the state of affairs than his demeanour changed.

"Have ye done yit?" he asked, in a voice choking with passion. "If ye've not, its time ye had!" and he at once took up the tray, with the glasses still unemptied upon it, and, uttering sundry imprecations, stalked from the room. They rose from their seats, and followed him down the mazy staircase. At the foot of it, they saw an open door; and, in the room to which it led, they noticed seven or eight big, powerful, villainous-looking fellows who were evidently awaiting orders. There were one or two doors across the passage, and each of these was closed. As they were making for them, with all the speed they could, their quondam host thrust himself in front of them, endeavouring to block the way. Fortunately, they managed to brush past him, and

hastened towards the street. They could hear his voice behind, denouncing them in bitter tones, and telling them that they had better not be found in the town again after what had happened, or he would make it hot for them ; but whether the stalwart ruffians they had noticed in the back room were following them, they did not stop to see. At last they reached the outer door. This was strongly barred and bolted, and it was some time before they could unfasten it. Suddenly it yielded, and they gained the open air. Thus far, they were unpursued ; but, with the vague warnings of their recent entertainer ringing in their ears, they thought it prudent to return to their hotel, which was close at hand, by a circuitous route, with the intention of misleading anyone who might be noticing their movements; and, at a late hour, they reached it and retired to rest. They had previously arranged to leave Killarney early the following morning, and so the adventure ended ; but, to this day, they are convinced that the wine had been drugged, and that, had they taken it, the man whose hospitality they had so cheerfully accepted would have waited his opportunity, summoned his accomplices and robbed them.

The town looked strangely lonely as we hastened through its straggling streets and past

its silent houses, in many of which the lights were already disappearing ; and, when we got beyond it, and reached the long, wide, lonely road, we could scarcely see a step before us, owing to the dense shadow of the giant trees whose leafy branches interlaced themselves above our heads, and were only pierced at intervals by fitful shafts of moonlight ; for the sky was cloudy, and no sooner had the Queen of Eve revealed her full and perfect orb and flashed her silver message to the world than some huge cloud would creep across the silent spaces of the heavens, and clasp her in his dusky arms, defiling her, like some dark monarch ravishing his pallid spoil. And not a soul was visible, and all was quiet as the grave.

We hastened on, for we had a considerable walk before us, and we were not quite certain as to our way ; but, soon after leaving the town, we had met some girls who had told us that we were going in the right direction, and we relied upon their word until we must have proceeded a mile or more. Then Mr. Richardson remarked that he did not recognize the road, and that he thought we must have taken a wrong turning; and, as the surroundings seemed a little unfamiliar to me also, we at last decided to retrace

our steps. After a hurried walk, we reached a point at which another road diverged, running underneath a spacious arch of trees. With increasing speed we took the new direction, and had proceeded half a mile or more when the way became doubly unfamiliar. We noticed that the trees were growing less frequent; and that there were not any signs of the bridge across the river, or any of the landmarks on which our eyes had rested during the walk from the hotel. Doubt deepened into conviction, and, in a very few moments, we became absolutely certain that this was not the route we ought to have taken. To make matters worse, in the one or two houses which we had passed, the lights were all extinguished. Completely bewildered, we at last descried a gleam in the window of a dwelling almost hidden in a clump of trees beside the road. We were making towards it, with a view to enquiring as to our whereabouts, when suddenly this light also disappeared, and the individual who had put it out had left "the world to darkness and to *us*," and to a watch-dog, that heard our footsteps and made the leafy branches echo with his muffled bark.

Matters were getting serious. It was not any longer open to question that we were on the wrong track, and, turning round again, we once more

retraced our steps. The position was far from pleasant. We were both weary with the day's exertions, and the night was rapidly deepening into midnight. There did not appear to be any other means of ascertaining the road we ought to follow, and it occurred to each of us that these sombre avenues were not particularly safe at such an hour; and our recollection of the fact that we had inadvertently divulged the name of our hotel in conversation with the shop-girls, coupled with their remark about the moon-lighters, and the thought of the hulking vagabond who had loitered round the premises, listening to all we said, did not tend to reassure us; for, bearing in mind the singular adventure which had befallen my relative, we were not inclined to place any very implicit confidence in the people of Killarney. What if the beggar at the door should have overhead our observation as to the hotel at which we were staying, and should communicate it to his confederates, and meet us on the road? Or what if the lasses at the whisky shop should be the sisters, or the daughters, of rascals of the character of the man who had endeavoured to drug his visitors and afterwards to rob them, and should put them on our track? The reflection was not at all encouraging, and

we strode forward at a quicker pace, and, coming to the turning, set out again upon the path which we had originally taken. It still seemed strange to us, but we determined to follow it, at least for such a distance as should suffice to decide the matter; for we knew that, if it were the right way, we must infallibly come, sooner or later, to the river. And, at last, a subdued murmur reached our ears; and, walking on a little further, we saw the moonlight glistening on the ruffled bosom of the stream, that flowed in melancholy music over pebbles multitudinous, and underneath the bridge, and by the borders of green fields and shadowy plantations; and presently we passed a lane which led to the left, and then a second lane; yet still we hastened on, having a vague idea that we ought to turn somewhere in this locality, but being doubtful as to the exact spot, and dreading lest we should get on to the wrong road again. We looked out on every hand for some sign of human life—a cottage in which the light still lingered, or a friendly wanderer to whom we might apply for guidance; though we did not know but that the first step we heard might be that of some scoundrel from the town, intent upon waylaying us, or else a masked and desperate band of moon-

lighters, abroad on some dark deed of crime.

Uncertain whether to continue in this direction, or to go back and take one of the turnings we had noticed; footsore, and half asleep, we were gradually becoming really anxious as to the aspect affairs were assuming, when, all at once, we heard the sound of approaching footsteps. Whether they were those of moolighters, or robbers from the town, or peaceable citizens, like ourselves, we did not pause to consider ; but our spirits rose, and we rapidly advanced in the direction from whence the sound proceeded ; and, in another moment or two, we were face to face, not with moonlighters, or robbers, or even ordinary citizens, but with two stalwart young members of the constabulary, on patrol, and equally ready to do battle, in the Queen's name, with the moonlighters, or in the name of civility, which I have never found to be lacking in this admirable force, to do their utmost to assist a couple of benighted strangers.

We found that we had followed the right road up to a certain point, but that we were now on the road to the Torc Waterfall, and every moment getting further away from the hotel—that we ought to have branched off at the second lane, in fact. Our informants were as handsome a

couple of young fellows as any girl might wish to see; and we did not wonder that the bonnie Irish lasses are tempted to flirt with the force, even at the risk of having their hair cut off. One of the two had been present at the evictions at Glenbeigh, and had witnessed and been an actor in the terrible scenes which had excited so much attention. The reader will doubtless recall many of the incidents of which he was able to speak with authority; how, within their barricaded houses, the tenants had defied the little army which had been despatched to the wild shores of Dingle Bay to execute the mandates of the law; how the doors had been forced open with hatchets and crowbars; how tenant after tenant was turned from his home, amid the wildest excitement, in the heart of a bleak and bitter winter; how some of the houses had been levelled to the ground; and how, in several instances, it had been found necessary to apply oil to the thatch, and set it alight; how fierce flames had leapt up to the gloomy sky, and wrapped the rude roofs in sudden conflagration; how, at one house, a woman who had been evicted had swooned with terror and excitement, and had been taken for dead; how, at this dark rumour, "many threw themselves down on their knees in the gutter and

sink of the yard, and raised their hands in prayer, whilst shouts and imprecations, loud and terrible, arose ;" how the officers of the law cowered between a double row of policemen in peril of their lives ; and how a fierce outbreak was only avoided by the timely intervention of Mr. Harrington. The account of all this, and the harrowing stories which were sent home by the friends of the tenants very naturally aroused a large amount of indignation in England ; but never was the unwisdom of accepting the *ex parte* statements of the Separatist faction more clearly shown than in the case of these, the most tragic evictions which had happened for many a long day. It appeared that some of the tenants who had been turned from their homes owed as much as nine years rent ; that the agent offered, in every instance, to take half a year's rent and costs in discharge ; that the tenants had themselves proposed, on two occasions, to pay a year's rent ; that this proposal had been accepted, and that they had then deliberately receded from it ; that the reason that it was requisite, in a few instances, to burn the houses to the ground, was that the tenants had, on former occasions, upon the departure of the police, at once resumed possession; and that, in the absence of some such precautions,

the evictions would have been rendered absolutely nugatory ; and some idea may be formed as to the conduct of the people when it is remembered that their own priest, Father Quilter, disgusted at their breach of faith, had written to Colonel Turner : "You have done your own part, and General Buller has acted a kind-hearted part, and my Bishop his part, but let Mr. Roe (the agent) now do his part with them. I think that we have done all that could be done. I shall never again during my time in Glenbeigh interfere between a landlord and his tenants. I have poor slaves who will not keep their word. Now let Mr. Roe or any other agent in future deal with Glenbeighans in any way he likes." And that was why Glenbeigh was burnt.

The policeman who had assisted at these evictions, whilst admitting that the Irish peasantry were often very poor and ill-used, declared that, frequently enough, the people would not pay their rent if they could ; and he broadly hinted that this was the case with many of the tenants at Glenbeigh. He was, however, we concluded, a Nationalist in politics ; for, when I asked him whether he objected to serving at such scenes, and what were his opinions concerning the Irish question, he did not answer me directly, simply

remarking, with a shrug of his shoulders, that, whatever the opinions of the constabulary were, they "did their duty." It appeared that they were in the habit of patrolling the country nightly in this fashion ; and that the vigilance which had been exercised since the advent of Sir Redvers Buller had done much to diminish the terrorism that was rampant in the neighbourhood.

In the midst of our conversation, a great trail of light, like some fierce, fiery serpent, shot across the clouded heavens, so near, and so lengthy, and so luminous that we were almost startled as we gazed at it. It must have been visible for close upon a minute. It was a meteor, by far the largest and the brightest and the longest in duration of any we had ever seen ; and we all watched it with straining eyes and breathless interest as it darted suddenly athwart the sky, and wondered whence it came and where its burning course would terminate ; and then, as suddenly as we had noticed it, we saw it vanish and the sky grow dark again.

Once more we reversed our direction, and presently we reached the lane, and, walking on beneath the trees, and up the slope they shadowed, we began to look out for the gate which led to the hotel ; for it was now almost midnight, and it was

quite possible that, if we delayed our return much longer, we should find the door locked, and possibly even the "boots" in bed—if "boots" ever go to bed. It seemed to us that we ought, by this, to be in sight of the place ; and we were beginning to think that perhaps the police had misunderstood us, and that we were still on the wrong road, when we suddenly espied a lodge, and a gate, and a grove, and a house glimmering in the moonlight ; and we comforted ourselves with the reflection that, at last, we had reached our destination. There was a dog slumbering by the gate, but our footsteps did not disturb him, and all was dark within the lodge. No sooner had we entered the grounds, however, than it struck us that we did not recognize them. But we hurried on, concluding that the darkness would account for this; and presently we reached another gate, and, passing through, were amazed to find ourselves upon a grassy lawn, in what looked like a private garden, and in front of a large and gloomy mansion.

We promptly made our exit, for, had we been discovered on the premises at this suspicious hour by any of the inmates, or by some policeman on patrol, we should probably have been pounced upon as dangerous characters ; and we were too

fatigued and the hour was much too late to induce either of us to look forward to such an encounter with complacency. But what if that sleeping animal beside the gate should awake and arouse the neighbourhood? Our steps were cautious and our voices low as we approached the brute, and carefully we pushed the gate ajar. In a couple of seconds we had regained the road, and then, as quickly as we could, we resumed our journey up the hill. We went a long way, but still we could not see the slightest sign of the hotel; and, as we both imagined it to be much nearer the main road than this, we began to think that, after all, we had taken the wrong lane; or that possibly the silent mansion we had just left was really the hotel, and that our hasty glance at its dark windows had deceived us; and, when we had gone a few paces further, our doubts became so strong that, for the fourth time, we retraced our steps, and crept stealthily past the dog, and through the gate, which seemed, in spite of all our efforts, to make a great noise. Then we walked boldly up the path, and reached the further gate again, and, stepping through it, strode carefully to the middle of the lawn, directly in front of the dim building, and examined it a second time. No, it could not possibly be the hotel! The whole environment

was different ; there was not any name above the door ; and it was only too evident that this was, after all, a private residence.

What were we to do? We left the lawn as silently and swiftly as we could, and reached the lodge and once again, were opposite its drowsy canine guardian. The animal moved, and made a noise, as if it had heard our footsteps and was about to make for us ; but luckily it slumbered on ; and we were in the mud and gloom and death-like stillness of the lane once more, and hesitating whether to descend or to ascend—whether to return to the principal road and try the next lane, or to walk on still further, in the hope of ultimately discovering the object of our lonely search. With the gravest hesitation, we at last decided to adopt the latter course ; and, completely worn out, we crawled slowly on and on up the wet slope until we were well-nigh in despair. It seemed absurd to think that the hotel was so far away as this ; and we had almost decided either to pause and rest awhile beneath the shadow of the trees, or dare the anger of the dog, and rouse the inmates of the lodge, or wearily descend to the foot of the hill, when suddenly we saw another gateway, and, winding through the field to which it led, a carriage drive, and, on a slope above it, a white building, and,

at the back of this, a line of dark and lofty mountains, and, to the right, below the eminence on which the building stood, a sheet of water on whose bosom dark and sleeping islands lay.

With a satisfaction which it would be difficult to describe, we felt, at last, that our troubles were ending. And then we reached the door, and saw, within, the anxious face of our faithful bullet-headed waiter, who was wondering whatever had become of us, and on the point of sending to make enquiries And, out in front, the mystic lake lay gleaming, with all its leafy islands and soft shores, the mountains overshadowing it, the clouds above them towering to a vaster altitude, and, over Mangerton, a cloud-peak rising to a height which dwarfed it utterly —a giant cone which might have crowned some Alpine solitude; for on its misty top the silver moonbeams fell, and made it seem, by contrast with the awful gloom that wrapped its base, as white as though it wore a garment of eternal snow.

CHAPTER III.

A WET MORNING — THE RUINS OF AGHADOE — A PLEA FOR THE BLACKBERRY—THE KERRY DRAGOONS—KATE KEARNEY'S COTTAGE—MOUNTAIN DEW—THE GAP OF DUNLOE—EILY O'CONNOR—THE GRACELESS GRACES AND THE TRICK THEY PLAYED US—THE BLIND FIDDLER AND HIS WIFE—WHAT ST. PATRICK SAID TO THE LAST IRISH SNAKE—THE COTTAGE OF THE COLLEEN BAWN—THE PEEP OF DAY—THE BLACK VALLEY—A PROTEST AGAINST IMPOSITION.

When we awoke, at about six o'clock in the morning, we could hear the rain beating in torrents against the window-pane. I looked out across the lake. A mist enshrouded it, the mountains were invisible, and, from a leaden sky, the water poured incessantly. We lay and listened, but the force of the storm did not appear to abate; and we tried to reconcile ourselves to the possibility of a day of idleness, which meant that we should either be compelled to abandon our intention of visiting the Blackwater, or else to omit a detailed

examination of Killarney and proceed, on the morrow, to Glengariffe, as we had all along intended. But, as the hour approached at which we had resolved to rise, the rain perceptibly slackened, the sky grew clearer, and we began to hope that we should still be able to execute our intention of riding, after breakfast, through the Gap of Dunloe, sailing down the three lakes, calling at the principal places of interest on the way, and afterwards driving to Muckross Abbey and the Torc Waterfall. And our hopes were realized, for, although the aspect of the sky was still threatening, the shower had almost ceased by nine o'clock ; and when, a little later, we mounted a a car, with a good-looking, well-dressed, and genial young driver, his complexion ruddy, his whiskers and moustache crisp and light, and his manner as prepossessing as his appearance, there was every prospect of a fine day.

We drove along the same lane, and past the same mansion, as on the previous night, and learnt that the latter was occupied by a professor from one of the Dublin universities. And soon we crossed the shallow, brawling river once again—the shallow rivers, like the shallow individuals, are always those that brawl the most—remembering, with some amusement, how eagerly we had

listened for the sound of it the night before. Presently we rattled through the town, and were able to admire, in the daylight, its various public buildings and other features of interest. The road wound along the noble park in the midst of which is situated the stately red mansion of the Earl of Kenmare; and when we had proceeded for some distance, we saw, upon a low hill to the right, the ivy-covered ruins of the Round Tower of Aghadoe, which is now only a few feet in height, and the mouldering remains of the tower of the Castle, of the foundation of which there is not any record extant, but which, from its traditionary title, "The Bishop's Chair," and "The Pulpit," was probably the residence of the bishop of the diocese ; whilst, close at hand, are the ruins of two chapels, one of which is said to date back for more than a thousand years, and to have been under the patronage of St. Finian.

Soon we passed a dismantled and dismal looking cottage from which the tenant had been evicted ; and then we came to Lake View, the mansion, I believe, of the son of the brother of the Great Liberator, who was, we heard, a staunch Conservative, as probably his respected relative would have been had he lived in these days, when patriotism is a marketable commodity, and the

test of a "mimber's" popularity the skill with which he advocates the gospel of doing unto others as you would *not* that they should do unto you. Other mansions and ruins were pointed out to us upon the way, and, in places, the hedges were thick with blackberries, many of them as large as the average strawberry, and glistening beautifully through the raindrops that lingered still upon the dripping leaves. We were tempted several times to dismount and partake of the feast which Nature had spread so lavishly along our path; and, as I enjoyed the flavour of the dusky fruit and wondered at its strange luxuriance, I could not help regretting the fact that it is so seldom cultivated. Under favourable conditions it attains a quality which will compare with that of almost any English fruit I know.

Leaving the blackberries, we crossed the river Laune, and fell in with the Kerry Dragoons, a host of strapping youths on sturdy ponies, who trotted along by the side of the car like a ragged army, clamouring and yelling to us to hire the animals which they respectively bestrode, each of them indulging in the usual number of lies as to the superiority of his particular steed. Our driver told us that, unless we wanted to be swindled, we had better make our bargains in

advance ; and that, if we preferred it, we should have ample time to walk through the Gap. But this latter course did not commend itself to our approval at all, and so we picked a pony each, and made terms with the two riders ; and thereupon the remainder of the detachment fell back. A little further on, the youths from whom we had hired our horses were considerate enough to inform us that they would send two lads with us to the Upper Lake to bring the horses back ; but they quite forgot to mention that the meaning of this was that, not only should we have to pay them an excessive figure for the use thereof, but should also be expected to handsomely reimburse the ragged juveniles whom they deputed to do the work which we had understood to be included in the hire.

Dunloe Castle, an ancient stronghold of the powerful O'Sullivan Mor, and now the residence of a local gentleman, is situated here ; and, close at hand, is the famous Cave of Dunloe, upon the roof of which were formerly to be found a number of inscriptions in the Ogham character, a style of writing supposed to have been used by the Druids. Unluckily the cave has fallen in, and this curious relic perished in the fall.

And now we reached the Gap itself, and

paused at the very ordinary cottage of a somewhat extraordinary person—the grandaughter of the damsel known in song as Kate Kearney, to wit—a fine-looking woman, with dark hair, and a complexion almost gipsy-like in its swarthiness. From this lady we purchased the usual glass of goat's milk and poteen, which is supposed to derive an added relish from the circumstance that the latter has been illicitly distilled. "Mountain dew," the name by which the smoky spirit goes, is not half so good as its name would lead one to anticipate; and the stuff we tasted, and for which we paid a heavy price, was a mere caricature upon a beverage of which I wish to speak with becoming respect. And I am rather inclined to think that it had paid duty in the ordinary way, and had not even the element of romance to recommend it.

Journeying on, we passed a quaint bridge above a pretty rapid in the tiny river Loe, which flows through the valley to the river Laune; and saw the misty summits of Macgillycuddy's Reeks, so called, said the driver, on account of a wager which Macgillycuddy, an illustrious local chieftain, had made with an English visitor as to the size of his turf stacks. It appears that he had shown him this mighty range of mountains, and calling his attention

to the fact that they were covered with the article in question, and thus easily succeeded in winning the wager. Carrantual, the loftiest point, is 3414 feet in height, and has the honour of being the highest mountain in Ireland. These mountains were on our right, forming one side of the Gap; whilst, on the left, the Purple Mountain, a shoulder of the Tomies, overlooked it.

We did not leave the car until we had passed the Cosaun, and the Black, and the Cushvalley, and the Auger Loughs, and reached a long, slanting, gray rock which overhangs the stream uniting them, and is known as the Pike Rock, from its supposed resemblance to that tyrant of the finny tribe. Here an individual in a small wooden-shed was doing his utmost to sell trinkets of bog oak and other curious bits of local handicraft; and two or three idle fellows lay in wait to fire a cannon, the echo at this point being reputed the finest in the Gap. Having mulcted us to the usual extent, they indulged in two idiotic yells which were twice repeated, and discharged their crazy little gun, the roar of which was also several times repeated, but somewhat indistinctly, for the wind was very unfavourable and bore the sound away from us.

At this point, we left the car and mounted the

ponies. There was not anything especially picturesque about the celebrated valley, and I must confess that we were both disappointed with it. It is true that, at times, it contracted to the narrowest dimensions, and that the lakes were interesting, and some of the rocks peculiar; but the cliffs immediately to right and left of us were not very high, and were of a uniform gray colour which was rather wearisome ; and the Gap did not in any place approach to grandeur. The Purple Mountain is closely associated with the story of the Colleen Bawn, and, at the upper end of the Gap, we called at a cottage which is said to have been the residence of that beautiful, but unfortunate maiden; whilst a bare-legged, dark-eyed, snub-nosed person, neither young nor pretty, presented herself, about half way up the Gap, and informed us that she was Eily O'Connor, the contemporary Colleen Bawn, and that "all the gintlemin bought her photo.," which was very kind of them, as it certainly was not calculated to adorn their albums much. I have one of these photos. by me as I write, and I cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, describe it as beautiful. An adventurous friend of mine who rather prides himself upon his lady-killing propensities had informed me that, on the occasion of his visit not long before, he had

put his arm around the famous Eily—I don't know whether he enjoyed it much—and I casually mentioned the circumstance and described the individual; but she naively answered that she didn't remember either it or him, and I must say that neither Mr. Richardson nor I felt much disposed to follow his example.

But some of the lasses who accosted us were very fine, comely, well-made creatures, all barefooted, and with limbs and figures that would have served as models for a sculptor. They had each some fancy wares to sell, or some poteen to proffer; and they were all gifted with the most consummate impudence. Each party we met declared that they were the last, and that, if we did not taste the mountain dew they carried, we should not have another chance of obtaining any; and they flattered us in a manner that was sickening until we refused to purchase, and then at once proceeded to denounce us with not less fluency. At one point, another lazy fellow with a cannon appeared, and told us that we were now opposite the finest echo in the Gap, which sounded like a falsehood, for the driver had informed us that, if we heard the first, we should hear all that was necessary; and my friend, in a weak moment, paid him sixpence whilst I was engaged in haggling with a crowd of pretty, but

brazen, young females, who made themselves so obnoxious, at last, that I told them a bit of my mind, and dug my heels into my pony's sides, and rode away, determined to escape their importunity. Mr. Richardson, seeing me off at full speed, immediately followed, forgetting, for the moment, that he had paid the man to fire the cannon; and it was only when we were some distance along the road that he thought of this and told me of the bargain. We looked back. The girls were talking to the fellow, and we turned our horses' heads and called out to him to fulfil his undertaking; but they appeared to be urging him not to do anything of the kind; and, as we made for him, the lanky swindler suddenly sprang over the rocks and was lost to view, while the nymphs who had evidently suggested the trick, with shouts of laughter, followed suit. I do not doubt that they had put him up to it, and that the whole of the beggars in the Gap were in league, and did their utmost to assist in fleecing every tourist who visited it to the utmost of their ability. But what a scandal it is that, in the midst of the most famous scenery in Ireland, the traveller should be subjected either to continuous imposture, or else to reiterated insult; and that the beauty of Nature should

be thus associated in his mind with the littleness of man. And, from the point of view of the beggars alone, the policy is a shortsighted one; for the effrontery of their requests and the avarice which is written on their very faces are sufficient to make the visitor resolve, in his anger, never to approach the place again; or, at least, to harden his heart, in the future, against all solicitations, and to refuse to give at all where greed is unlimited and gratitude infinitesimal.

At one point, a blind old fiddler and his wife were standing by the wayside; and on hearing our appeal, the poor fellow struck up a few discordant notes upon his execrable instrument, and sang, or rather chanted, a lengthy, patriotic song of some Irish battle, in a dismal, droning voice, his wife, an unpretentious, kindly, modest-looking woman—the best of all the beggars in the Gap—beating time with her feet, and afterwards, as he struck up a livelier air, dancing a jig for us, with true Irish spirit, and not without grace, the old man continually inciting her to "shtep out, old girl!" and getting quite excited as the dance proceeded.

Meantime, we had passed the last of the five lakes, which are known collectively as the Cummeen Thomeen Lakes. It is called the

Little Black Lough; and in it, said my attendant, "St. Patrick drowned the last shnake, putting it into an iron chist, and telling it that he would lit it out the day afther to-morrow." This is, in fact, the lake which disputes with Clew Bay and the Lower Lake at Glendalough the right to claim the honour of accommodating the reptiles which were banished by the famous Irish saint. Both lakes and river were much swollen after the recent rain, and, in several places, had overflowed the road, the water lying at a considerable depth right in our path; but our ponies dashed through it bravely, and seemed to quite enjoy the task. We had a difficulty in urging them along except at these places, or where we came to a sudden ascent in the road, in either of which events, they would at once prick up their ears and go at a smart canter, a process which led, in the former instance, to a tremendous splashing. As another result of the heavy rain, a hundred tiny rills were trickling in silver foam down the gray sides of the Gap, which, in spite of this, looked very dreary; for the sky was still overcast, though it brightened as we rode higher and higher, and presently came to a spot from whence we had a glimpse down the whole length of the dim defile, and could plainly see the

green fields beyond it, the finest sight in all its length. This was called the Peep of Day.

At the cottage of the Colleen Bawn we had dismounted to procure a glass of milk from a woman who invited us inside. Here several very pretty little shoeless toddlers were playing, and, at our request, they proceeded to spell "cat" and other words of one syllable for us, with bright faces and sweet and timid voices, much to the satisfaction of this good lady, who looked clean and cheerful and happy, though the house was poor and miserable enough. She did not endeavour to deceive us by claiming to be a descendant of the beautiful damsel whose house she was said to occupy, and she declared that Eily O'Connor herself was equally unentitled to the damsel's name; she appeared to speak the truth, sold a genuine article for a reasonable price, and treated us with a deference and civility which where quite a treat after our experiences among the bare-legged beauties from whom we had just escaped.

The Peep of Day was the last, as well as the most pleasing, portion of the Gap. We had now attained its greatest elevation, and began to descend again by a circuitous and winding pathway which afforded us a splendid view of the

much more beautiful Coom-a-dhuv, or Black Valley, a gloomy ravine which lay upon our right, dark and lonely, and overshadowed by enormous hills, a black river meandering through the level meadows which the hills environed, and flowing onwards to the Upper Lake, of whose wooded islands and inky surface and surrounding heights we were now able to obtain delightful glimpses as we looked behind. Upon the right, we passed a waterfall, and, in a corner of the valley, was another and a finer fall ; and here, as in the Gap, strange streaks of silver flashed upon the shoulders of the mountains, the glittering offspring of the recent rain.

The Coom-a-dhuv is only the upper extremity of a valley which stretches from the foot of Carrantual and gradually broadens until, in the shadow of Mangerton, it holds the placid waters of the last and largest lake. Our lads had left us as we entered it, and struck across the intervening hillocks, instead of accompanying us along the winding pony track, which ran towards Carrantual, and then suddenly reversed its course and sloped towards our destination; but we were still pestered by the vendors of poteen, and other "pirits on honest peple's corn beef barrils," as Artemus Ward would doubtless have designated

them. We were, however, now rapidly descending, and soon we passed some scattered cottages, left the gray Gap and the Black Valley behind, and entered a thick plantation. Here the lads rejoined us. Of course, as we had anticipated, they each expected to be extravagantly paid, notwithstanding the fact that we had already paid an ample sum to the owner of the horses, which certainly ought to have covered any extras of this character ; for, if the youths who owned them were too idle to look after them, it was surely their duty to provide the necessary assistance. But it was merely another item in a gigantic conspiracy to defraud the unhappy tourist at every turn. The only safe rule is to treat the entire crowd as liars and impostors until they are proved to be otherwise. Some of the people, instead of being almost destitute, must make such piles of money as would cause the industrious artisan to turn green with envy. I do not, for a moment, grudge the inhabitants of this beautiful region their good luck ; but I am inclined to think that, if they would be a trifle moderate in their expectations, and would render reasonable services for reasonable fees, instead of combining to fleece the unfortunate stranger in the manner I have described, they would probably be

compensated by a great addition to the annual influx of visitors, and would prove once more the truth of the old adage that "honesty is the best policy."

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE UPPER LAKE—THE LONG REACH AND ITS ECHOES — THE EAGLE'S NEST—SHOOTING THE RAPIDS — WE LAND ON DINISH ISLAND — THE MIDDLE LAKE—THE LOWER LAKE—THE ELEMENTS IN RIVALRY—INNISFALLEN—WE ARE CAUGHT IN A STORM—ROSS ISLAND—MUCKROSS ABBEY — TORC WATERFALL — A WONDERFUL OUTLOOK—THE BOATMEN AND THE DRIVER ON THE QUESTION OF THE DAY.

The final toll was levied at a singular old gateway by which we obtained admission to the lake—levied, I believe, by the owner of the estate, infected by the spirit of the people of the Gap, and desirous of sharing in the spoil. Beyond the gate, we found ourselves walking along a pleasant pathway, with green lawns and scattered trees on either hand, and the river which flows from the Black Valley, enlarged by several tiny tributaries, meandering through a maze of curious channels, and forming a grassy and diminutive delta ere its gloomy waters mingle with the waters of the lake. It is at this point

that the boats which are sent up from the various hotels await the arrival of the parties who have journeyed hither through the Gap. There were several of these boats to be seen this morning, and perhaps a score of ladies and gentlemen were strolling in isolated groups towards the point of embarkation ; and presently boat after boat moved quietly away. But we did not see any signs of the boatmen whom we had expected from our own hotel. At first we waited at the landing-place, thinking that they had not yet arrived ; but, as we now discerned the name of our hotel upon one of the few remaining boats, we concluded that it was *we* who were late, and that they must have gone for a ramble. Accordingly we retraced our steps, and made enquiries ; but without effect, until, just as we were nearing the entrance gate again, we saw a man and a youth, and found that these were the persons for whom we were looking. Then, returning to the landing-place, we took our seats, and, in a little time, were following the rest across the calm surface of the Upper Lake.

This lake is the smallest of the three, being only two and a half miles in length by three quarters of a mile in breadth ; but it is exquisitely beautiful, and said by most visitors to be the finest

of the three ; for around it rise the grandest of mountains — upon the east, the Derrycunihy Range, their sloping shoulders covered with verdure ; and, on the west, the graceful outlines of the Purple Mountain ; and, looming dimly through the mist upon the rear, the mighty summits of the Reeks. Twelve Islands nestle in this noble sheet of water, clad, for the most part, with the glossy leaves of the arbutus, the famous "myrtle of Killarney," a low, straggling tree with long, bare, rough branches, but all its great ungainly limbs concealed by its green and shining and perennial robe, and adorned at times with waxen blossoms or rich crimson fruit. The peculiarly cheerful tint of this remarkable evergreen is prominent on every side amid the humbler trees and shrubs which share the task of covering these lovely isles. The largest of the twelve is known as Eagle Island ; and next in interest are M'Carthy's and Arbutus Islands, though all the nine have some peculiar feature calculated to delight the eye and charm the memory. Rowing gently through these gems upon the bosom of the lake, the last, if I remember, in the line of boats which had one by one dropped slowly from their moorings and were visible in picturesque procession on before, we glided into

Newfoundland Bay, a long and narrow creek at its eastern extremity. Then, leaving this upon the right, we entered the Long Range, a narrower channel, over two miles in length, which connects the Upper and the Middle Lakes, its waters flowing past a number of very curious rocks, including Coltsman's Eye, on which the elder of our two boatmen—a man with a large nose, a short red beard, a somewhat pale face, a serge jacket, and an obliging disposition—directed our attention to some curious flat marks in the rock by the water's edge, which were, he said, the footprints of the O'Donoghue, a lesser mark being indicated as the footprint of his wife, the twain, it appears, having fled for some reason and from some person whose antecedents I have forgotten. There was also visible, to the right of the Reach, and almost level with the water, a white length of rock which very much resembled a cannon; and, a little further down the stream, was another rock, supposed to represent the hulk of a man of war that had suffered from the effects of its discharge. Lower still was the tiny island of the Four Friends, so called, we heard, because, on one occasion, four college chums, who had never met before since they left the halls devoted to the pursuit of learning, had

met, by accident, in this vicinity, and celebrated the occasion by a feast upon the island.

Our boatmen had brought us an ample supply of appetizing eatables, and joined us in a repast which was not the less enjoyable because partaken of as we were sailing peacefully across the Upper Lake, or drifting slowly down the Reach, that narrowed now, and now grew wide again, and yet was always beautiful; but, in the hurry of leaving, for they had started rather late, they had forgotten to bring a bugle, an instrument which ought always to accompany a party who intend to take this route, for, from the Long Reach, the finest echoes in Killarney are to be heard, some of them being flung from hill to hill almost a dozen times. Happily, however, the boat immediately in front, which contained two or three gentlemen and as many ladies, was more fortunate; and, as they were only a few yards ahead of us, we had the full benefit of the musical genius of the man who accompanied them; and when he skilfully imitated on his sweet-toned instrument the chiming of a peal of bells, and an echo caught the sound, and, ere it died away, another echo took it up, and, ere the first had fallen, yet another answered to the music, and another and another swelled the strain, we listened, in a dream, to cadences

that seemed to steal from some far shrine of more than earthly worshippers. And, when the music of the bells had died away, he played "The Meeting of the Waters"; and once again the echoes caught the sound and flung it back, each successive repetition commencing ere the music of the one it followed died away, and all of them blending into perfect harmony, until it seemed as if some God-like organ had been reared amid the hills, on which the angel Israfel was playing, while the universe was mute, and from the keys he drew the chord which, lost on earth, was filched from heaven, and linked to other chords, and blended into music such as Psyche heard within the halls of love; or such as Shelley, "like a luminous angel, beating in the void his visionary wings in vain," perchance had listened to when from his soul the yearning answer came:

"I pant for the music which is divine;
My heart in its thirst is a dying flower.
Pour forth the sound like enchanted wine;
Loosen the notes in a silver shower.
Like a herbless plain for the gentle rain,
I gasp, I faint, till they wake again.

"Let me drink of the spirit of that sweet sound
More, oh more!—I am thirsting yet!

"It loosens the serpent which care has bound
Upon my heart, to stifle it;
The dissolving strain, through every vein,
Passes into my heart and brain."

At the Eagle's Nest, we expected to have listened to the witching notes a second time; for it is, I believe, usual for visitors to leave the boats and land immediately opposite, the bugler concealing himself before he begins to play. The effect is heightened by this device, the mystic airs appearing to proceed from some invisible source, as if the hills had found their voices, or the woods were breaking into unimaginable melody.

The Eagle's Nest itself is one of the most symmetrical peaks that I remember, rising perpendicularly from the water to an altitude of seven hundred feet, and clothed about its base, and far up its steep and rocky front, with festoons of greenery, and, even near the summit, clad with stunted shrubs or hardy heather, each side ascending with singular regularity from the left and right respectively until they meet and form a perfect point. Upon its shelving sides the king of birds prepares his eyrie and defends his young when, from the upper heights, the daring peasantry are lowered in June to capture them. The callow contents of the nests are reared, and afterwards

disposed of, I am told, in order to prevent their becoming too numerous in the neighbourhood.

But we were to be disappointed in regard to the music, for the boat in which the bugler was seated was partly occupied, as I have already mentioned, by ladies, and it began to rain a little, and the poor, dear creatures were afraid of wetting their dresses, and would not allow the boat to stop to enable him to give another illustration of his art ; and, doubtless to the annoyance of the gentlemen who accompanied them—unless they were gentlemen of the same calibre as an acquaintance of mine who is said to have lain on his back, in the stern of the boat, soundly sleeping, as it glided down this lovely channel—and very much to ours, the boat passed slowly on. Hence we had to be satisfied with the shrill yelling of our red-bearded oarsman, which was many times repeated, in spite of the unfavourableness of the wind at this point. Even the shrieks with which he sought to imitate the bells again were so softened and prolonged and intermingled as to verge on harmony.

And so the ladies missed the echo, and I sincerely trust that they got the wetting, notwithstanding their excessive precaution. What

did they care for "the music which is divine"? They were more interested in the make of their mantles or the cut of their crinolettes; and to imagine that, for any music under heaven, they were willing to endure a dozen drops of rain, or so, was expecting altogether too much, and showed an ignorance of the feminine character which was positively unpardonable.

In my anger at missing a second opportunity of listening to the bugle echoes, I had almost forgotten to mention another and very different one—the famous Paddy's Echo, which, in answer to the question, "Paddy, how are you?" is said, on one occasion, to have replied, "Very well, thank you!"

Presently we began to notice that the stream in front of us was white with foam, and hurrying in great waves towards the Old Weir Bridge, an antiquated structure of two arches, through which the water, flowing over a stony bottom, and down a long and rugged slope, chafes and foams and dashes in a manner which is not a little exciting. Here the boatmen shipped their oars, and, with a rush, the buoyant craft slid into the seething current, and rocked and tossed from side to side, the waves leaping over the bows,

and the little vessel oscillating like a feather on a whirlpool. But the stream was deep to-day, and the eyes and the hands of the boatmen were steady, and, with an occasional push to keep her in the middle of the channel, the boat went dashing bravely underneath the bridge and down the foaming river, amid a perfect shower of spray, and, in a very few moments, we shot out into the quiet waters of the Middle Lake. The sheltered corner where the Reach unites with the Lake is called the Meeting of the Waters, and the bridge is built to link Dinish Island to the mainland.

We stepped ashore upon the island in order to enable the boatmen to bail out the water which we had shipped in the brief but exhilarating process of "shooting the rapids," and found ourselves in front of a cottage clad from floor to summit and from end to end with the countless blossoms of the fuchsia, its red and purple bells and green and glossy leaves contrasting wonderfully with the snow-white walls and rustic windows. The cottage faces the lake, and is flanked and backed by trees and shrubs innumerable—indeed, the whole island, so far as we could judge from a tranquil walk along a pleasant road to the right, appeared to be

mantled with the finest foliage.

Again embarking, we rowed across the Middle Lake, which is also known as the Muckross and the Torc Lake. The Muckross Peninsula lay just before us now, with all the wealth of the demesne which covers it to lend an additional charm to the landscape, and, upon the south, the purple outlines of the Torc Mountain. The lushest vegetation bordered on the lake, with grassy lawns to vary it, and always, in the background, those great hills, that loomed like monsters through the mist that shrouded them.

Upon the left was another bridge—a quaint and solitary arch uniting the isles of Dinish and Brickeen, and as we floated under this we experienced a slight recurrence of the rapids. And now we had left the Middle Lake, which is about two miles in length by one in breadth, behind us, and had reached the Lower and the largest lake, Lough Leane, six miles by three in area, and dotted with abundant islands. And here the rain was falling, and half the lake was hidden in a dense and gloomy fog, through which the nearer isles rose inkily, the farther hidden as by some impenetrable curtain ; but, resting on the largest of them all, a dazzling arc of rainbow, shining against the mist with radiance indescribable. And, over-

head, the sky was blue as if no cloud had ever stained its sapphire, and, above the Torc Mountain, which was now behind us, the sun was shining like a phantom with a soul of fire, the misty veil in which his mighty form was covered turning luminous, and penetrated, like some strange transparency, with burning shafts of gold ; whilst, on the rounded summit of the mountain of Glena, erstwhile in gloom and vapour, one strong beam of light was resting like a smile upon the face of care.

We had not time to see O'Sullivan's Cascade, which lies amid the woods along the western shore ; and, leaving Glena Bay, with the charming cottage underneath the roof of which the Queen had paused, long years ago, to dine, upon the left, we hastened on to Innisfallen. As we approached, the clouds were vanishing, and all the level margin of the lake was visible, with parks and mansions and immense hotels, and, standing finely out amid a beautiful demesne whose verge the water bounded, the stately dwelling of the Earl. No mountains towered above the landscape now : the grandeur lay about the margins of the Upper and the Middle Lakes, the quiet grace was here. And, when we stepped upon the sweetest island in the leafy

sisterhood of isles, and trod its velvet sward, and walked amid the trees which, from the lake, had seemed to cover it, but which we found to open out in sunny glades and lawns, with thickets here and there, and, by the shore, a "chapel with a Saxon doorway, called the Oratory," and, scattered amid the undergrowth, the ruins of the Abbey established by St. Finian some thirteen hundred years ago, we were charmed beyond measure.

In this Abbey the "Annals of Innisfallen," comprising scraps from the Old Testament, a fragmentary universal history to the time of St. Patrick, and a record of Irish history to the commencement of the fourteenth century, were composed. The original is preserved in the Bodleian Library. It is said that, in 1180, an enormous quantity of gold and silver and other valuables was deposited within the edifice, which was supposed to be a place of great security, but that Mildwin, son of Daniel O'Donoghue, contrived to steal the treasure; and tradition adds that, in the cemetery, many persons were slain by the M'Carthys, another ancient local family of much renown.

Upon the island is a holly tree reputed to be the largest in the world, its trunk having a

circumference of fourteen feet ; also a holly growing through a tombstone ; and an ash-tree with a trunk so thick that four men with clasped hands can only just encircle it; nor do these exhaust the arboreous wonders of this matchless isle, for a tree is pointed out with an extraordinary cavity in the trunk, immediately above the root, which is known as the Bishop's Grave, and another with a strange aperture through which the guides assist the ladies to pass, a function in which they are seldom short of assistance. From a little rocky promontory particularly charming glimpses of the lake may be obtained, and upon it there is a level shelf which is known as the Bed of Honour, and derives its designation from a visit of a former Duke of Rutland, who was once the Irish Viceroy.

Anything more serenely beautiful than this island of twenty-one acres, with its silky sward and splendid trees and curious ruins and delicious glades, is impossible ; and, as we lingeringly turned away, I found myself repeating, half unconsciously, the tender words :

> " Sweet Innisfallen, fare thee well !
> May calm and sunshine long be thine :
> How fair thou art let others tell,
> While but to feel how fair be mine.

"Sweet Innisfallen, long shall dwell
In memory's dream that sunny smile,
Which o'er thee on that evening fell
When first I saw thy fairy isle."

As we moved away, we passed a small island called the O'Donoghue's Prison, to which, like so many other places in the locality, a legendary interest attaches. By this the sunshine had disappeared, and, as we turned the boat's head towards Ross Island, the rain began to fall once more, and the skies were densely overcast ; and soon the black surface of the lake was covered with innumerable points of agitation, and appeared to absolutely boil and seethe beneath the heavy downpour. The spreading shores were swathed in gloom, and half the isles were hidden by the darkness; and then the wind grew boisterous, and the hissing of the waters which the rain occasioned was lost amid the wild commotion of the angry waves, that rolled and dashed about the boat, and broke in spray upon our limbs and bodies, damp before, but simply saturated now. And, though the rowers toiled at the rowing, with faces firmly set,and stalwart arms,and mighty energies, we scarcely seemed to move, so fierce the tempest was. Wet and shivering, and every moment drenched with some new billow, we

watched the waves that washed along the woody shore, and rapidly came to the conclusion that not only should we be unable to land upon the island, but that we might congratulate ourselves if we escaped swamping. More furious grew the blast and more wildly surged the waters. We scarcely seemed to make the slightest headway, but the stalwart rowers struggled on. Wetter and wetter we became, until we might have been soaked in the lake, so limp our garments were, so damp our bodies; and both the oarsmen looked as wet as we, but still they struggled on. When we asked them whether there was any possibility of calling at the island, their looks were grim, but their only answer was to set their teeth and bend to the oars with new ardour. We had greatly wished to see Ross Castle, but, in spite of their exertions, it was evident that we were going to be dis-appointed.

But what was this? Surely the waves were gradually sinking, and the winds becoming gentler; and it was palpable that, on the beach, the waters broke with ever lessening fury. What was the meaning of it all? We had suddenly rounded a corner of the island; we were in a cosy bay; however rudely Boreas might be revelling far out upon the lake, or even round the fairy shores of

Innisfall, his rage was blunted here ; and, with a few more strokes, we ran ashore beneath the overhanging trees that covered all the island like a royal robe, and, stepping from the boat, a pool of water lying underneath the seats, we forced our way through the thick and dripping foliage, and came, at last, upon a narrow winding path. This we proceeded to follow, and, in a little while, we passed a charming rustic mansion, clothed in creepers and embowered in trees, a pleasant lawn and graceful garden fronting it. It was, we were told, the residence of the local commandant ; and, further yet, we saw a huge old ruin, with a tower from which the flag of union proudly streamed amid the region of disloyalty, and knew that we had reached the Castle. We sheltered as best we might, with a company of American ladies and gentlemen, in the ancient doorway, for the door was closed, and no one came to open it ; and, though we went round to the little house adjoining and knocked repeatedly, we were not able to discover anyone to answer our summons. After protracted waiting, however, the door was suddenly opened, and we climbed the tower, and crossed some planks that led to a long and narrow and dangerous ledge inside the main walls of

the quadrangular building beyond the tower, and looked down into the great deserted main apartment. From this perilous ledge many fine views of the lake and its environs are obtainable, and, noticeably, of the extensive park of Lord Kenmare which is connected with the island by a bridge erected near the Castle. Upon the southern point of the island, which is the largest in any of the lakes, there are the remains of a copper mine. This mine was worked with much success until, from its proximity to the beach and the extraction of the ore from the veins that were near the surface, the water found an entrance in quantities with which the engines were not competent to cope. The mine is said to have been originally worked, by the Danes, or even by their predecessors.

The Castle itself is a picturesque old ruin, with its lofty, ivy-covered walls and noble tower. It was built by one of the O'Donoghues, and is interesting as the last castle in the province of Munster to surrender to the might of England. In the month of July, 1652, Lord Muskerry had been defeated in County Cork, and many of his followers, including the famous Kerry chieftain, Macgillicuddy, slain. Retreating to the Castle, he again and again successfully resisted the attacks of General Ludlow, and not until the long-boats of

the famous Cromwellian general, each of which was capable of containing 120 men, were seen upon the the lake did the little company surrender; for they believed in an old prophecy which declared that the island would remain impregnable till ships surrounded it; and, at the sight, although the vessels were only sent to discover a suitable landing-place, with a view to subsequent operations, the garrison, in the words of Ludlow's Memoirs, "thought fit, by a timely submission, to prevent the danger that threatened them."

The rain had almost ceased and the waters were rapidly becoming calm again when we returned; and we were not long in gliding past Elephant Island, and Cow Island, and Table Island, and other islands equally peculiar in name and in appearance, into the comparatively tranquil waters of Castlelough Bay, a flight of cormorants hurrying above us, with necks extended and shrill scream.

Making haste to go ashore, we scrambled as we were best able to the adjacent road, and eagerly looked out for our driver, who had arranged to meet us here. We soon discovered him, and sprang upon the car again. We had kept him waiting, it appeared, for a considerable time; for we had visited more places than he had bargained

for, and had been delayed by the storm and the rain; and he also had suffered somewhat from the effects of the downfall. But such things are "nothing when you are used to them," as people say; and, in fact, a shower, at Killarney, is familiarly known as "the O'Donoghue's Blessing," though, as this was more like a waterspout, the O'Donoghue was probably in a bad humour to-day.

A romantic character was this O'Donoghue, and many are the legends told of him. Let one suffice. "Once every seven years," runs the story, "on a fine morning, before the first rays of the sun have begun to disperse the mists from the bosom of the lake, the O'Donoghue comes riding over it on a beautiful snow-white horse, intent upon household affairs, fairies hovering before him, and strewing his path with flowers. As he approaches his ancient residence, everything returns to its former state of magnificence; his castle, his library, his prison, and his pigeon-house, are reproduced as in olden time. Those who have courage to follow him over the lake may cross even the deepest parts dry-footed, and ride with him into the opposite mountains, where his treasures lie concealed; and the daring visitor will receive a liberal gift in return for his company;

but, before the sun has risen, the O'Donoghue recrosses the water, and vanishes amidst the ruins of his castle."

This is the O'Donoghue of the Lakes, whose character appears to have been unimpeachable ; but legend also tells of an O'Donoghue of the Glens, who was a cruel and bloodthirsty tyrant.

We now drove on to Muckross Abbey, through the lovely park which skirts the Lower and the Middle Lakes upon the eastern side. Here the residence of Mr. H——, a fine building in the Elizabethan style, is situated. The proprietor, however, appears to have "fallen on evil days," for the Baron E. De Mandat-Grancey states, in "Paddy at Home," upon the authority of Mr. Townsend Trench, that the property is heavily encumbered, and in the hands of the creditors ; and that Mr. H——, who was an officer in the army, was compelled to resign his commission, and to work as a clerk in the office of a New York attorney.

The Abbey is a fascinating ruin. Entering the main portion of the roofless church, where several singular tombstones attract attention, you see, upon the right, a chapel, with other ancient tombstones, and, proceeding through a gloomy passage on the left, you find yourself in the prettiest little

cloisters imaginable, with a mighty yew tree in the centre of the quadrangle which they encompass—a tree which throws its dark green arms abroad across the whole dimensions of the court, and, leaving it in endless twilight, and extending high above the crumbling walls, bestows its shade on all the mouldering and roofless chambers overhead. And from the cloisters dismal doorways lead the wanderer to black and ruined chambers just adjoining, through which he has to grope with stick in hand, in constant apprehension of a fall; and then, emerging, and proceeding underneath the tower that stands in the middle of the ruin, you come upon the chancel, with a window of ornate design, through which luxuriant vegetation peeps; whilst on the sill, and all amid the tombs, the hart's tongue grows, and round about you rest the ashes of the kings of old beneath strange slabs engraved with Irish characters, and here and there, you see some modern monument in honour of the dead. From the upper portion of the edifice you may get amazing views of lawns and woods and lakes, and round the antique walls the ivy clings, as round the whole locality there hung the halo of a vanished age.

The Abbey was founded in 1192, but added to

and altered afterwards ; and it bears, in its round or pointed arches, evidences of the different periods at which the various portions were erected. Within the fireplace of the kitchen, something like a century ago, a hermit named John Drake is said to have lived for no less than eleven years, and to have won the reverence of a people prone to superstition and credulity by his mild and cheerful aspect and his holy life.

Time was passing, and already the shades of evening were beginning to fall when we left the ruin. Our driver urged his horse along at as quick a rate as he was able, for we had yet to visit the famous Torc Waterfall, and were uncertain as to the exact hour at which the gates that led to it were closed. Leaving the park, and dashing up a good road beneath another avenue, with rich plantations stretching out on either hand and covering the hills upon the left, we caught the sound of water and approached a cottage ; and, one of its inmates appearing with a key, we were admitted to a valley where the birch, and the larch, and the alder, and the oak, and the holly, and the arbutus grew prolifically ; whilst, underneath their shade, a stream was brawling over rocks and pebbles.

Ascending by a winding path, and follow-

ing the murmur, which increased as we advanced, we stood, at last, upon a tiny platform where a rustic seat was placed; and here we saw the stream precipitated, in a broken volume of snowy whiteness, from a ledge between two leafy cliffs into a leafier hollow seventy feet below. The valley was contracted here, and clothed in foliage from the very margin of the river right up to the summit of the crags that were visible high above the crest of the fall, the universal greenery contrasting magically with the great cascade, which, swollen by recent rains, plunged headlong with continuous roar, and hid itself beneath the trees and undergrowth, and so, concealed, went murmuring towards the lake.

But, from this point, the path led us higher and higher yet, until, at last, we were almost level with the top of the fall, and watched it lose itself amid a veritable wilderness of vegetation. Immediately across the stream was the Torc Mountain, and, beyond the valley, which looked like a gigantic basin with the side towards the lake removed, we could see the Middle and the Lower Lakes, bestrewn with leafy isles, and, climbing further still, up paths from which a score of wondrous scenes unfolded, and over which, in places, rustling branches hung, we ultimately

reached a wooden barricade, and came to an abrupt pause. Further than this we could not go, unless by scaling the barricade. But there was not any pathway on the other side, and we should probably no sooner have found ourselves upon the open mountain, than we should have *lost* ourselves, like a gentleman of whom the driver subsequently told us, especially as night was rapidly approaching. The driver had conveyed this gentleman, together with a couple of ladies, to the gateway by the cottage, and the three had ascended to the platform opposite the fall. Here the gentleman had left the ladies, as he wished to get as high as possible. He reached the railings, and, imagining that it would be an easy matter to retrace his steps, he clambered over them. In a very few moments he was out of his bearings; and, in a state of absolute bewilderment, he wandered to and fro for two hours, incapable of finding any landmark by means of which he might retrace his steps and reach the valley. His fair companions were first perplexed and then considerably annoyed at what they counted his remissness; but perplexity and annoyance had speedily given place to anxiety, and it was with a feeling of intense relief that they saw him

reappear, at last, fatigued and somewhat crestfallen, but otherwise none the worse for his adventure.

From a precipice far above the fall we could just catch a faint glimpse of the stream before it took its awful plunge, and descried one speck of whiteness where, with a sound subdued by distance, it descended, directly underneath the dizzy ledge on which we stood, into the mysterious chasm of leaves stretched out in waving majesty below. Beyond, the lakes were spread, the green and level peninsula dividing them ; between the valley and the brink thereof, a stretch of level lawn, of perfect emerald ; upon the placid waters, green and gloomy islands ; the mountains of Glena and Tomies opposite, and, far away, the pleasant, undulating shores which bound Lough Leane upon the north—a panorama of immense extent and marvellous diversity, and deemed among the loveliest in all this lovely land. And, as we gazed and gazed, with hungry eyes, upon this feast of beauty, a mist enshrouded it ; the mountain on the other side the cataract assumed its robe of darkness, and over all the landscape fell the mystic fingers of the twilight.

Attracted by the charms of Nature, we had nearly forgotten politics to-day. It seemed to

border on profanity to introduce our little human discords in the midst of scenery so divinely fair, But I may just observe,in concluding the chapter, that our driver and both our boatmen were Home Rulers, though each declared that if the Land Question were settled, and the trade of the country stimulated, so as to afford the people fresh sources of obtaining a livelihood, and make Irish poverty the exception instead of the rule Home Rule would not be necessary ; and that they only desired it as a means to this end, and not from any particular love of constitutional change. The driver stated that he knew for a fact that persons had been boycotted for merely refusing to join the League ; and that the transformation in the conduct and demeanour of a man who had received a warning from the executive of that body in reference to his course of conduct was palpable to everybody.

CHAPTER V.

THE CAR FOR GLENGARIFFE — OUR FELLOW-TRAVELLERS — A SARCASTIC PRIEST — A MAP OF PARADISE — THE LAST OF THE LAKES — A STIRRING DRIVE — KENMARE — WE VISIT THE CONVENT OF POOR CLARES — A TOUCHING SPECTACLE — A FEMALE POLITICIAN — "THE WORST ACT THAT WAS IVER PASSED."

Early in the morning, on a huge coach, with two priests, a gentleman who had spent some years at the Cape, an engaging newly-married pair, a couple of American ladies, with agreeable manners and complexions like lemons, and several others as fellow-travellers, we left for Glengariffe. We paused at the Muckross Hotel in order to complete our load. Here an old woman was selling a variety of curious wares as mementoes of Killarney ; and the colonial gentleman, who was young and good-looking, and very much bronzed by his residence in southern climes, amused himself by chaffing her a little, declaring, when she exhorted him to

make a purchase in order to enable her to "pay the rint," that the people would be able to "pay the rint" easily enough if they would not spend so much upon poteen. She replied pretty smartly, and hinted that he was an American; but he did not appreciate the observation, and promptly retorted that he was an Irishman, or rather, as he afterwards confessed to us, an Irishman upon his mother's side. But, whatever might have been his nationality, he was sufficiently entertaining; and we were destined to see a good deal of him during the next day or two. He was evidently anything but a Home Ruler, and he was not long before he was chatting jovially with the priests on politics, and Killarney, and things in general. One of these priests was stout and jolly, and the other lean and taciturn and somewhat sarcastic, and neither of them appeared to share his opinions on the Irish question.

"I think," said the gentleman from the Cape, as we were passing the Queen's Cottage, on the green shores of Glena Bay, "it is a pity that Her Majesty does not visit Ireland oftener. I believe the people are loyal at heart, and that they would give her a good reception."

"Yes," said the lean and taciturn cleric

aforesaid, "if she came to open a parliament in Dublin."

And then Mr. Richardson and I accosted him, and told him how much we had enjoyed our holidays in Ireland ; and how foolish was the fear which a large proportion of the people of England had been accustomed to cherish as to the danger of travelling in the country ; and how, wherever we wended, north, or south, or east, or west, the great majority of the peasants had treated us with the utmost courtesy.

"Although they're 'Hottentots'!" said he.

But, if the passengers were interesting, what shall I say of the drive? Along the beautiful Muckross demesne we rode, and past the waterfall, and on beneath Torc Mountain, with constant glimpses of the Lower and the Middle Lakes, and all the parks and hills and woods that bounded them, and all the islands they enshrined, ascending gradually through royal avenues where ash trees, with their fern-like foliage and fiery fruit, and gigantic oaks, with tiny acorns clinging to their knotted boughs, and graceful birches, with barks of silver and branches swayed by every breeze, and hollies of enormous size, a mass of prickly leaves and glistening berries, together with a glorious undergrowth of shrubs,

made all the slopes like one great garden. And then we hastened on beside the Reach, across whose stream the Eagle's Nest rose proudly, with the Tomies in the rear of it ; and by the Derrycunihy Waterfall, whose foamy flow we paused to watch awhile ; and under woody rocks on which, not half a dozen yards away, a young and shapely stag was browsing; and along a winding road that rose and rose until the Upper Lake lay far below us, and, above the gloomy Coom-a-dhuv, we saw the towering summits of the Reeks, and, prominent above the rest, Carrantual, the mightiest of them all.

But higher still we climbed, the prospect lengthening and broadening and gaining in magnificence with every footstep of the four strong steeds that whirled the coach along. Soon we passed the Mulgrave Barracks, white and castle-like and picturesque, amid the trees upon the left ; and, a little way beyond them, gained a point from whence we saw, as in a dream, the valley in whose green recesses all the lakes were lying peacefully, and visible, in all their sweet extension, from the gloomy outlet of the Coom-a-dhuv to far Killarney, where the largest spread its bosom to the sky, emancipated from the gloomy guardianship of those high hills that watched it on the southern

shore. And here we made the final pause, and, from an elevated point of vantage, saw the Home of Beauty spread before us like a map of Paradise.

And then the horses bounded on once more, and, like a dream, the picture faded ; and by the margin of a mountain lake we hastened towards Kenmare. The driver had directed our attention, in the course of the ascent, to a man who was begging, and declared that he was known to have several hundred pounds in the bank, a story which is confirmed by the Baron E. De Mandat-Grancey ; and, as I mounted the box at this stage of the journey, I had the opportunity of obtaining from him many other interesting particulars about the district and the people, and of feeling to the full the exhilaration of being seated on the loftiest portion of a very large and lofty coach, behind four swift and steady horses, and hurrying by the brink of awful precipices, or dashing down great slopes at whirlwind speed.

The road led us, for a time, by the edge of an enormous hollow, in whose depths a swollen stream meandered through the midst of meadows of amazing green ; and presently we caught a distant glimpse of an extensive bay,

and then descended by the side of a yellow, brawling river. And now, upon the borders of the bay, we discerned a cluster of houses, with a church, and a chapel, and a convent conspicuous afar, and, slackening speed, pulled up, at last, in the main street of Kenmare.

The hour which the rest of the passengers devoted to eating we decided to devote to the Convent. Known as the Convent of Poor Clares, and prettily situated upon the left, just as you enter the town, its walls of blue and white stone stand out effectively in grounds laid out in lawns and paths and beds of flowers, with statues of the virgin and the saints to vary them. The church, which stands close by, and was designed, we heard, by a priest, is really a very handsome building, with its graceful spire, and the crucifix in front of the main entrance, and the great beams which upbear the Gothic roof, and are themselves upborne by angels, beautifully carved, and the gorgeous coloured window of the chancel, richer than the rest, and representing that dark scene to which the eyes of Christendom have turned, in all the ages, dim with sympathy. Above the entrance door, and close beside the basin where the holy water lay, another cross was reared; and,

on the wall, a printed notice promised a substantial remission of purgatorial pains to all who paid before it certain rites prescribed. This was an evidence of superstition which it was impossible to regard without regret; but, in the Convent, everything awakened pleasing thoughts and left a pleasant memory; and, from the moment when we entered, and were saluted courteously by the sweet, kind-looking and lady-like Sister to whose gracious guidance we resigned ourselves, to the moment when we left, we were simply charmed with all we saw.

"It is," says Mrs. Henry King-Parks, "to the sacred work of educating, and, in so far as means will permit, *feeding* and *clothing four hundred* destitute boys and girls, that twenty-five ladies, regardless of the world's pleasures, heedless of the world's applause, and careless of the arduous nature of their task, have nobly and voluntarily dedicated their lives, solely for the sake of Him who said '*Feed My lambs*';" and it was now to be our privilege to see the fruit of their disinterested labours.

The nun whom we were following showed us, first, some specimens of the handiwork of the inmates of the Convent — such a variety of fancy articles, in such a variety of designs,

and so skilfully executed, as to make the eyes of manhood open wide with wonder; for an extensive apartment was almost filled with neat glass cases, and in every case some dainty fabric was displayed for sale.

Proceeding to a comfortable upper chamber, we found a number of happy-looking young women, who were all seated, plying their needles with nimble fingers, and busy producing articles the like of which had moved our admiration in the room below. Several of these girls were on the verge of womanhood; but they gladly crowded hither from their humble homes to acquire the knowledge by means of which it was possible, we were told, to earn as much as eighteen or twenty pounds a year without the slightest difficulty.

I may say, for the information of my lady readers, that specimens of this Kenmare lace are sent, on application, to any satisfactory address, and orders executed with promptitude; whilst any lady may have a special design prepared, and set aside for her own sole use, and thus be enabled to remain unique in costume in an age of imitation And, should this volume chance to fall into the hands of some English dame or damsel who would like to deck her person with one of the prettiest products of human ingenuity which I ever saw,

and, at the same time, to encourage the Sisters in their labour of love, and help to develop an industry which is capable of doing so much for the poor people of Ireland, I would urge her to give these peasant girls a trial.

In a long apartment on the ground floor—the Infant School—a great circle of bright-eyed lassies, with rosy cheeks, and pretty little bare feet and legs, as clean as their dear little faces, were gathered, watching us with eyes of mischief as they sang a childish song, their tiny trebles blending in such sweetly simple music as the "harpers harping with their harps" might pause to hear, and their hands and fingers moving simultaneously in sweet accompaniment. And every tiny maid was clean and scrupulously neat in her attire, though all were manifestly poor enough, and every winsome face as happy as if its owner had listened to the voice that said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me."

We were strangely moved as we watched them in their innocence and purity, and saw their merry smiles, and heard their tender song. It was clear that they loved the school and loved the teachers; and, though the Sisters of the Convent had forsaken home and friends and all the pleasures which the world holds dear, they

must have found, in every grateful face, a compensation such as the world could neither give nor take away.

In another room a number of boys were assembled. Here the scholars were provided every morning with a free breakfast; whilst, in a fifth apartment, we found a large number of children seated at long desks, writing in copy books, and superintended by two very attractive-looking teachers who were not attired in the conventual garb, and who glanced at us out of the corners of their eyes as we entered, and looked as healthy and as happy as the children. The Sister took up one or two of the copy books for our inspection, pointing out, with pardonable pride, the progress which the older scholars were making in their studies. They watched us intently as we scrutinized their workmanship, and a hundred eyes were directed towards us as we expressed our appreciation of their skill and of their good behaviour; and then, returning, we signed our names in the Visitors' Book, thanked our conductress for her courtesy, and told her how much we had enjoyed our visit, and how delighted we were with the arrangements of the Convent, and the contentment of the boys and girls who learnt their earliest lessons here, and the skill of the lace-

makers, and the kindness which seemed to pervade the whole establishment like an atmosphere, and then we departed with the sunniest of recollections and the heartiest goodwill. Heaven bless the children with their bonnie faces and endearing ways; and heaven bless the gentle Sisters who have given their lives to make the children happy! The sacrifice involved is such as, unto souls less pure, is hard to comprehend; but peradventure they have found a recompense for their renunciation, and have learnt that:

"This is peace
To conquer love of self and lust of life,
To tear deep-rooted passion from the breast,
To still the inward strife;

"For love to clasp Eternal Beauty close;
For glory to be Lord of self; for pleasure
To live beyond the gods; for countless wealth
To lay up lasting treasure

"Of perfect service rendered, duties done
In charity, soft speech, and stainless days:
These riches shall not fade away in life,
Nor any death dispraise."

Returning through the cheery main street of the town, we had just time to enter one of those

incongruous institutions to which I have already had occasion to refer, and which appear to deal in everything from whisky to blacking. Here we had to make a hasty lunch of biscuits, discussing the Irish question, as we ate, with the strapping female who had served us. She stated that there was only about one Protestant to every twenty people in the town, and gave utterance to some extreme Nationalist sentiments, remarking, among other things, that the Act which admitted every leaseholder in Ireland to the Land Courts; enabled tenants whose rents had already been reduced by the Commissioners to have them reduced still further, in accordance with the fall of prices ; postponed evictions all over Ireland for six months, and prevented them altogether when the Court should so direct, allowing the tenant to pay his arrears by instalments, extending, if necessary, over a long period, was "the worst Act that was iver passed."

Such is the result of the teaching of the men who ask John Bull to entrust his Other Island to their keeping. If this is the reception which they give to a legislative scheme so generous as the measure I have indicated, would it not be well to abandon all further attempts to meet their wishes, and to be guided solely by what we

ourselves consider necessary? If ever the landlords of Ireland are handed over to the tender mercies of these gentry, may the Fates preserve them !

This strapping female had spoken, at first, however, with a certain amount of good sense; but when she supplemented the remark I have quoted by declaring that the aristocracy were doomed, and, after expressing her conviction that the English democracy were on the side of her countrymen, and her gratification that English members had commenced to cross the Channel in order to support the Irish leader, she singled out Mr. Conybeare as an object of especial admiration, I gave her up. "The force of folly" could "no further go." It is bad enough that any of us are still sufficiently idolatrous to worship the Master of Hawarden, and sad enough that anyone should be found to tolerate, for a moment, such a weathercock as Sir William Harcourt; but, if we are mad enough to regard Mr. Conybeare as one of our political heroes, then we had better remove the statues of Burke, and Chatham, and Pitt, and Peel, and Palmerston, and Beaconsfield from their pedestals at Westminster, inscribe above its doors the word Ichabod, and invite Macaulay's New Zealander over at once.

Our driver also was a Nationalist. He thought that the landlords had brought their troubles upon themselves, affirming that they spent their money abroad, and that the reductions which they made in their rents were quite inadequate. He said that twelve years' purchase would be a fair average price for the land, though some would not be able to pay it; but, like so many others whom we had met, he appeared to believe that, if the Land Question were permanently settled and industries started in the poorer parts of Ireland, the people would not care very much about Home Rule.

In front of the hotel at which the car had stopped, were some nondescript ruins such as are scattered all over the country; and we had just time to examine these before fresh horses were attached to the great vehicle, and, with a crack of the whip, we left the town behind us.

CHAPTER VI.

ACROSS THE BAY—THE LORD OF LUGGACURREN—EVIDENCES OF THE AGITATION—A WILD LOCALITY—A RACE WITH A RAINBOW—THROUGH THE HEART OF THE MOUNTAIN—A CURIOUS MANUFACTORY—THE OLD WEAVER—A TRANSFORMATION SCENE—WE MEET THE CURTIN FAMILY—MARVELLOUS VEGETATION—A CHAT WITH THE POLICE—CROMWELL'S BRIDGE—A MOONLIGHT SCRAMBLE—BANTRY BAY.

We crossed the bay by an elegant suspension bridge. Above the bridge it narrows to receive the Roughty River, and, below, it broadens gradually to the sea, with several islands slumbering amid its shining waters. Outside the town, we passed some pleasant houses, and, skirting another river, came across a noisy fall, which tumbled fiercely over a ledge in its bed in two uneven portions, with a murmur swelled and deepened by the recent rain; and, further on, we saw another pretty fall, and rode beneath long vistas of abundant foliage.

The district was principally owned by the Marquess of Lansdowne ; and it was to his generosity in dealing with the tenants upon this estate that the difficulties at Luggacurren are attributable. He visited the locality, which, as we were able to see for ourselves, is of an extremely barren character ; and his enquiries satisfied him that the fall in the price of stock and butter, and the failure of the Munster Bank, had involved the tenantry in difficulties. To those who had not entered the Land Court he therefore offered a reduction in rent ranging from 25 to 35 per cent., allowing a reduction of 20 per cent. upon the judicial rents also. This was perfectly voluntary, and proved the liberality of his disposition. At Luggacurren, however, the tenants were wealthy and prosperous. One of them, Mr. Dunne held a farm of no less than 1,400 acres, and another, the notorious Mr. Kilbride, of 700 acres ; and in every way the circumstances of the two estates were utterly dissimilar. There he offered abatements of from 10 to 20 per cent upon non-judicial rents, refusing any reductions upon the rents which had been fixed by the Court ; and, because he declined to grant the same terms as he had given to the poverty-stricken tenants of Kerry, the Plan of

Campaign was adopted, and about two-thirds of the people joined it. For fifteen years prior to 1886 there had only been one eviction upon the estate, and enormous sums had been expended by the owner in improving it. Naturally, however, in the face of this combination, the law had to step in, and a number of the tenants were dispossessed. They were accommodated in huts erected by the League, and supported out of its funds; and, accompanied by a living example of English tyranny in the shape of Mr. Kilbride, the man who farmed 700 acres, and who lived in a handsome house and publicly declared his ability to pay his rent if he chose, Mr. William O'Brien, the indefatigable champion of every crazy cause, set out for Canada to meet Lord Lansdowne, who was then the Governor-General, "at his palace gates, and make the air ring with his fameas an evictor and an exterminator"; to "track him night and day the wide world over, and from one end of the Dominion . . to the other," until he was "hunted out of that great and free" country. However, the hunting was the other way, and Mr. William O'Brien had a bad time of it. The people of Canada do not appreciate patriots whose principal duty is to send the hat round, and martyrs with

700 acres and a bank balance ; and the statesmen of our noble northern colony, unlike their next-door neighbours, have not found it necessary, as yet, to welcome runaways with open arms, and lionize the advocates of larceny. And hence the future Hero of the Breeches failed to carry to that home of peace and loyalty the strife and hatred which, with all the evil genius of the witches in "Macbeth," he had hatched in Ireland

In spite of the liberality of the Marquess, however, the driver's praise of him was sufficiently lukewarm, and he declared that neither he nor * Lord Kenmare was anything to boast of. He

* The Kenmare estate, through which we had been recently passing, covers over 100,000 acres, and is the largest in Ireland. Lord Kenmare has spent £163,000 in improving it, and his reputation as a landlord is distinctly above the average. But the influence of the League was steadily diminishing; "Kerry was lapsing into law and order;" Lord Lansdowne was one of the five trustees of the estate, and, if the agitators could force him into concessions here, their position in fighting him elsewhere would be strengthened; whilst a portion of the tenantry were deplorably in arrear, and ready to welcome any avenue of escape from their liabilities; and hence, in the year after our visit, the Plan was introduced. "It is urged and supported by about 200 broken men against the wishes of the balance," and "is enforced by terrorism of the worst character," says Mr. T. W. Russell; and, whilst the rents may, in some cases, have required revision, it seems evident, from the facts he adduces, that it was not the misdemeanours of the landlord, but the exigencies of the agitation which were responsible for the subsequent troubles.

pointed out to me a large farm-house by the roadside from which the tenant had been evicted, but from the chimneys of which the smoke was rising just as usual, owing to the fact that it was occupied by an emergency man ; and, in a deep and lonely valley further on, another, empty and deserted, and the fields all bare, for the agents of the landlord had been to cart the crops away.

Soon after leaving Kenmare, we had seen a woollen factory on the river, and a number of good houses ; but, for the rest of the journey, the houses were few and far between, though often of substantial size, the area of the farms, in many instances, exceeding a hundred acres. Most of this, however, was generally barren mountain land. Occasionally we should pass a chapel, or a school, or a constabulary barracks ; and, at one place, we met a number of children who were selling blackberries. This was just as we were commencing a long and winding and tedious ascent which gradually led us to the summit of a mighty ridge, on either side of which a sombre valley stretched ; and then, far away ahead, we could see some tunnels where the ridge grew wider, and closed the valley along the side of which, at a tremendous and increasing elevation, we were slowly riding. As

we neared the extremity of the ridge, we were able to gaze right over both valleys. Each was deep and desolate, and each was bounded by stupendous hills, whose brown and barren shoulders were bedecked with threads of silver, white and beautiful as lace ; and now we saw, above the intervening hills, the misty summits of the great Macgillicuddy's Reeks again, and all the heights about Killarney ; and, still rising, passed through the tunnels which we had descried in the distance, and along the end of the valley, looking down into its dim recesses from a height of something like a thousand feet, and, in this hollow, saw the rain descending in vast sheets like vapour, white as wool, and moving constantly. And then, upon these moving scrolls, a dazzling double rainbow was projected, one end within the valley, and the other resting on the summit of the hills, and scarcely higher than the level of the road. The spectacle was, in itself, sufficiently astonishing. But, as we gazed, we discovered that the rainbow also moved. At first it lay behind us in the hollow; now we saw that it was drawing nearer and nearer, and quickly overtaking us ; and soon, in all its flashing mystery of hues, it was visible exactly opposite, and scarce a score of yards

away; and, lo! it glided on, a phantom woven of the subtlest essences of gems as splendid as the gems with which the angels built the walls of heaven. It passed along the white and quivering sheets of mist and rain, and made them luminous with unimaginable shades, and stole across the shadowy valley like a thing ethereal; and, as we rode into the final tunnel, was slowly vanishing, and leaving that grim hollow to the ghosts of storm and solitude.

The tunnel was two hundred yards in length, hewn and blasted out of the mountain, with the long marks of the blasting holes discernible on every hand, and the great rugged rocks hanging darkly upon either side of us and overhead, and, far away in front, a circle of light, that rapidly grew larger and brighter as we dashed, with a dull, reverberating rattle, through the narrow passage, and then, emerging, came immediately upon a small white house, and knew that we had reached the loftiest portion of the road, and, in the middle of the tunnel, crossed from Kerry into Cork; and that, from this point, we should not cease to descend until we paused upon the brink of Bantry Bay.

The driver watered his horses here. Whilst

he was thus occupied, I noticed, in a humble shed adjoining the house, that some one appeared to be working at a rude machine; and, as the driver, at this moment, made the remark: "That is a shtrange sort of a manufactory, sor!" I sprang from my elevated seat and entered. The shed was built of rough, loose stones, and the light was admitted through a small and unglazed aperture to the right of the door. The floor consisted of the bare rock, and the gloomy apartment was just large enough to contain a small and clumsy hand-loom, of the most primitive construction. At this a blear-eyed, wistful-looking old man was weaving a coarse kind of frieze, such as is worn by the peasants of the neighbourhood, the fabric on the loom growing by such imperceptible degrees, and requiring so much hard labour of both hands and feet, that I was greatly surprised when the old man told me that he was able to manufacture about nine yards a day.

"And how much do you get per yard for it?" I asked.

"Twopince, yer honour!" said he; and then he turned to resume his occupation.

It was a sad sight to watch the poor fellow,

with a look of second childishness in his face, working on through the weary days at the same monotonous, solitary task, with nothing to vary the unending round of toil except the great coaches, with their crowds of pleasure-seekers, and the everlasting grandeur of the hills. But I had imagined that he was a member of the adjoining household, and that this was merely his workshop ; and that the family would derive an income, during the season, from the tourists who would pass their doors.

"It *is* a strange manufactory!" said I, as I remounted the box. "The man says he only gets twopence a yard for his labour! What a shame it seems! It is really almost enough to make a man a Home Ruler"—here my sentiment overcame my logic—"to think of that old fellow busily engaged from morning to night, and only earning, after all his labours, eighteenpence a day!"

"Ah, he gits more than twopince a yard, sor!" replied the driver. "He gits quite fourpence!"

"But even that seems poor pay for such a dreary calling," I rejoined. "However, I suppose the family will make a good bit from the people who pass on the coaches?"

"Och, he's nat one of the family at all!" said he.

"And has he to depend entirely upon his weaving?" said I.

"Sure, an' he has!"

"What does he do with the cloth?"

"Oh! the people on the hills round aboot buy it from him; but very often it is only sent up to him by the farmers, who shpin the wool, and thin git him to weave it, and aftherwards make their own garments from it."

"I suppose he lives with the people at the house?"

"Nat at all! The only house he has is the one in pwhich you saw him!"

"You don't expect me to believe that he dwells in that hovel?" I asked, in amazement. "Why, it was only just large enough to contain the loom; there was not any glass in the window, or any furniture; indeed, I didn't see even a bed or a fire-place!"

"That'sh pwhere he lives, inyhow!"

"And does he sleep on the bare floor?" said I, incredulously.

"That is all the shilter he has!" said he. "I'm telling ye the truth!"

"But has he not either bed or fire?" I persisted.

"Well, he has some sort of makeshift to lie upon!" said he. "Did ye nat see it? And he can light a fire if he likes!"

But where he would light it, and where the bed was I cannot say. I had not observed the slightest sign of either, and, as I have already stated, the loom appeared to be the only article in the apartment. In fact, I never, even in Ireland, saw a more miserable habitation, or was more moved by a scene of utter poverty and loneliness than I was by that of the shed of the dim-eyed weaver at the highest point along the road to Bantry Bay. A score of times since then his image has returned to me as I beheld him bending at the clumsy loom in that dark and dismal place a thousand feet above the level of the sea; and, as I write, I think I watch his shaking hands and eyes of mute appeal again, and almost cease to wonder at the discontent which, like a nightmare, haunts the loveliest corners of the Emerald Isle.

My thoughts were gloomy as we rode away; but, overhead, the sky was once more blue, and, far away across another mighty valley on the right, I saw a lake, set like a sapphire high in the mountains, and gleaming and glittering in the returning sunshine—a lake three miles in circumference; and, in a moment more, we burst upon a scene of loveliness so wonderful that it almost took our breath away.

The valley had widened now, and lay exactly beneath us, surrounded by the grandest hills, whose purple sides were fretted with innumerable streaks of silver, twined and twisted into every shape conceivable, and flashing into gold at times; for all the heights were thick with rivulets, and all the rivers full. And, further still, we saw the valley of the Eagle's Nest, diverging from the larger vale, and looming in the distance hazily, with all its crags and woods and waters, the sun above it shining through a screen of mist, and flooding both the vales with splendour, and brightening the blueness of the heights around, and all the silver of the streams, and falling on majestic forests far away below, that filled the valleys as they broadened towards the sea, and stretched in front of us like great fields of moveless foliage, unstirred by any breath of wind, and verging on the waters of the bay, in whose blue arms blue isles were slumbering, blue mountains watching them afar, and, over all, a blue and beauteous sky, where cloudy "isles of calm" reposed; whilst, in the distance, sea and sky united, and the earthly and the heavenly blue commingled.

The suddenness of the revelation, and the tremendous contrast which the scene afforded

to the misty hollow on the other side the ridge seemed magical. I have been privileged to gaze on many charming landscapes ; but never have my eyes beheld a spot more fair than this celestial valley, with its sheltering hills, and peaceful woods, and shimmering cascades, and all the glistening grandeur of the silent bay beyond.

We rattled down the noble road, the woods extending as we neared them, and the bay for ever widening ; and, turning towards the left, we found another valley, almost parallel to this, but ultimately joining it, as some great tributary joins a greater stream ; and here we detected abundant traces of an earlier road, which wound high above the summits of the mountains to the left of us, instead of piercing them. Continually descending, we reached, at last, the leafy paradise above whose topmost branches we had caught our earliest glimpse of the sea ; and, losing it now for awhile, we rode beneath huge avenues, more beautiful, if possible, than those of the morning. The chestnut, with its green and spiky fruit, was specially conspicuous, and hollies of a brighter tint and larger growth than I had ever seen before, their berries green as yet ; whilst everywhere we saw

the yellow berries of the eglantine, amid a setting of pale, pinkish flowers, or gazed on bending branches red with hawberries, or clutched at tendrils laden with the luscious blackberry ; and here and there observed the honeysuckle, with its creamy flowers protruding from some shadowy opse like fairy drinking-horns.

Amid this leafy covert was the hunting-box of the Earl of Bantry, and through the valley sang a stream ; and soon, emerging from the avenues, we entered an enchanted village, and passed a quaintly pretty rectory, standing underneath a wooded slope, its walls embowered in gorgeous creepers, and, at the front of it, a garden blazing with an infinite variety of flowers. On a gentle mound adjoining was a church as beautiful as everything besides ; and then we rode between two hedges of fuchsia, each twelve feet in height and many yards in length, and past a strange old over grown hotel, with creepers round its windows, the wall of red and purple bells half hiding it, and the bay immediately in front, with only the road between the steps which led up to the main entrance and those which led down to the calm blue waters, which were hidden, like the building, except at this particular point, by a wondrous wall of bells. This was Eccles's Hotel, and here several of our

fellow-passengers, including the two priests, dismounted.

But we rode on through other woods, and across a quaint old stream by a quaint old bridge, and by a primitive quarry, from which two or three individuals were loosening lumps of stone with crowbars, only a very few blocks having been extracted as yet. It was intended to erect another hotel in this vicinity, we were told. But further still we rode, and, entering some spacious grounds, that sloped delightfully towards the bay, we saw a large white edifice in front of which were pleasant lawns and groves, and huge hydrangeas, phenomenal in size, and covered with such rich and heavy and innumerable blooms as made one think that surely this must be the dwelling-place of Flora herself. The building was Roche's Hotel, and here, the crowning marvel in the wonderland, we found a fuchsia twelve feet in height, and over twenty yards in circumference. The valley absolutely teemed with vegetable life, and plants that pined like dwarfs in English shrubberies, in spite of constant care, were growing everywhere, untended, to the size of giants; and, from the wildness and the loneliness of mountain peaks and rocky passes and deserted roads, we had reached a region beautiful as that

which angels guarded with their swords of flame.

We had met, upon the way, some ladies and gentlemen in a wagonette, and we learnt, on our arrival, that they were the Curtin family. On looking at the Visitors' Book, we found that theirs were the last signatures in it, and that they had only left about an hour before.

The story of this famous family is one of the saddest and, at the same time, one of the most inspiring, in the whole history of the agitation. It appears, from the evidence given by Miss Lizzie Curtin and Mr. George Curtin before the Commission, that their father, who, with his wife, two sons and two daughters, resided at Castle Farm, near Castleisland, on the estate of Lord Kenmare, had incurred the displeasure of the local Nationalists by paying his rent; and that, on the night of the 13th November, 1885, he was visited by a party of moonlighters. A servant announced their approach, and Miss Lizzie Curtin at once hastened upstairs for arms, followed by her father, who took from her a gun and a revolver. They then descended, and Mr. Curtin called out, "Well now, boys?" At this a volley of shots whizzed past Miss Lizzie Curtin's head. The lamp went out, and Miss Nora Curtin declared that her brother Daniel had been hit.

Lizzie then made her way to the parlour door, which was locked from the inside, and was joined by Nora and George, and the door forced open. They found Daniel here struggling with three masked men for a gun. Lizzie seized the gun, whilst Nora pulled the mask from the face of one of them, and cried, "Dan, do you know him?" Managing to retain the weapon, she hid it in the parlour until the arrival of the police; and, in the meantime, her brother succeeded in overpowering his assailant. In going upstairs again, she stumbled over and seized a second gun, and, proceeding further, she found her father lying wounded in his bedroom. She asked the servants to go for the priests, the doctors and the police, but they refused to fetch the latter. In the hall one of the moonlighters was discovered, dying from the effects of a shot. Mr. Curtin's wound also proved fatal. Scarcely any of the neighbours attended his funeral, and when Father Murphy, one of the local priests, alluded, to the murder, on the following Sunday, the people "made a noise with their feet," and many of them left the chapel. The family were shouted at and hooted on the road, stones were hurled at them, and they were called murderers and informers; ballads were printed denouncing them; their pew was

broken, and the carrier who brought a new one in order to replace it was beaten, and the pew smashed at the chapel gate. Provisions were denied to the household, and they had to send their horses to Killarney, nine miles or more away, to be shod. Two persons were convicted for the murder, and sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude; and, after that, the servants all left, and Father Murphy, who had spoken kindly of Mr. Curtin on the occasion of the disturbance in the chapel, was partially boycotted.

The persecution to which the family were subjected became so intolerable that, after enduring it for nearly two years in patience, they left the locality. Mr. Curtin was himself a member of the League, and Vice-President of the local branch, at the time of the murder, and the visit was not prompted by any personal unpopularity on his part. In fact, he seems to have been killed simply and solely because he had paid his rent. His sons and daughters gallantly assisted in withstanding the attack, and in bringing the criminals to justice; and for this they were insulted before the very altar, and assailed upon the threshold of the house of God. A more hideous story has surely seldom been told. The conduct of the people became, at last, so

scandalous that even the League—never too vehement in its denunciation of the crimes on which it throve—took steps to condemn it, and to endeavour to lessen the weight of the tyranny to which the courage of the Curtins had exposed them; but its intervention was evidently not particularly effective, for Lizzie Curtin declared that the persecution continued until they had all departed from the neighbourhood.

Prior to this, in 1881, a party had visited the house and asked for firearms, and, on their declaring that they wished to get in, Mr. Curtin announced that he would shoot the first who attempted it. Miss Lizzie Curtin overheard him, in reply to their questions, say that he had paid his rent, and was not a Leaguer; and they then asked him what he was, and he said "an Irishman." It is a pity that there are not more Irishmen like him. Faced with the resolution displayed by this fearless farmer and the plucky girls we passed upon the road, the wretched conspiracy which flouts alike the laws of God and man would shrivel up like some vile upas tree.

After dinner, we sauntered back to the village —a tiny place with a few houses, and a post office, and a contented-looking population; and, on the way, we accosted two of the constabulary. One

of them seemed, somehow, to be desirous of escaping the catechism to which we wished to subject him. But the other chatted freely on political topics, and said that, although the majority of the people wanted Home Rule, they had not any conception as to where it would lead them, or what might be its possible results. There had not been any recent outrages in the neighbourhood, he added; and he did not excite himself very much about evictions, remarking that, with the present land laws and good seasons, the tenants had not any particular cause of complaint The explanation of his friend's anxiety to get away is perhaps to be found in the fact that we saw him, or, at least, a man who very much resembled him, walking a girl out a little later, so that, evidently, the tar and scissors' policy had either not yet penetrated to this quiet corner, or else had failed of its effect.

Turning from the road by which we had come, we crossed a stream, and reached a blacksmith's shop. Here we paused awhile, to

"Look in at the open door;"

and watch "the burning sparks that" flew

"Like chaff from a threshing floor;"

and to hear the heavy breathing of the bellows and the clang of the hammer on the anvil ; and to gaze at the red glare of the forge as the twilight deepened ; and to wonder whether this smith were a descendant of the smith with whom Thackeray fraternized during his "Rainy Days at Glengariff." However that might be, the present son of Vulcan was of a taciturn disposition, and did not seem disposed to vouchsafe much information on any subject whatever ; so we left him, and, with the utmost difficulty, stumbled through the trees behind the wooden edifice which served him as both house and smithy, and along the dark river, and across deep gutters, and over gnarled and twisted tree roots, and fallen trunks, and snaky underwood, two pigmy natives doing their best to guide us, until, at the imminent risk of breaking our necks, we gained the ruined structure known as Cromwell's Bridge.

Standing on this bridge, in the gathering darkness, which was deepened by the silent trees that rose, with leafy arms, on either shore, like voiceless sentinels, we heard the river brawl beneath its two remaining arches, and gazed, from the fragments of a third, which had been broken off about the keystone, and was hanging crazily in mid-air, into the black waters that

glided noisily around the rocks, and underneath a sombre arch of leaves, towards the bay on which the woods abutted, thinking, as we gazed, of him who is said to have built the bridge as he passed to wreak his vengeance on the fierce O'Tullivers; of his iron character, wherein so much of grandeur mingled with so much of crime; and how, in Ireland, he had shed such blood as as might "the multitudinous seas incarnadine," and earned the execration of a race oppressed full often, but, in all their history, never trampled on more brutally than by him.

Continuing along the road, and presently emerging from the woods, we came upon a path which followed the margin of the bay; and making, in the moonlight, over stones and bogs and heather, groping our way as we went, and expecting, every moment, to stumble into some swamp or fall from some great slippery rock, we gained, at last, a rocky mound, and paused to enjoy the prospect. Directly opposite was Garinish Island, with its picturesque martello tower; and, above the foliage on the further shore, we saw the lights of our hotel. To the left, were the lights of the village, and, overhead, the lights of heaven, and Luna's full and sad and silvery face reflected in the glassy waters of the

bay, that stretched, with wooded shores, towards the west, a glittering highway to the world of waters, or a moonlit passage into shadowland. A memorable bay, for twice in England's history the fleets of France had entered it, intent on war, and animated by the deadliest hatred of the Mistress of the Seas. In 1689, they had sailed hither to assist the cause of James the Second. And, in 1796, a formidable fleet left the harbour of Brest, at the instigation of Wolfe Tone, with the intention of striking terror to the heart of England. But ill-luck attended them from the outset. Before they gained the open sea, one of their war-ships ran upon a rock, and 520 men out of the 550 on board were drowned. A little later, another went ashore and lost a thousand men ; and then a furious storm arose and scattered the fleet in all directions. No sooner had the storm abated than a fog came on, and now for days the hapless vessels sought in vain for their comrades in misfortune. Sixteen alone of all the forty-three which sailed from Brest reached Bantry Bay, and then a second storm arose, reducing them by half. These disasters began to grow monotonous, and the leaders of the projected invasion came to the conclusion that it would be just as well to start

for home again, and leave in peace the land with which the elements themselves seemed all allied. Of the entire force, only one officer and seven men set foot in Ireland; and these, going ashore to reconnoitre, were taken prisoners. Should Irish sedition ever again invoke the aid of foreign arms, let us hope that, once again, the billows will befriend us and the blasts prove kind; and that it may never be necessary to dye the green fields of Erin with the blood of battle, though we shall not shrink from that, whatever combinations we may have to face, if our duty to the Empire demand it.

But, while we mused, dark clouds ascended rapidly, and made towards the moon; and we could see that, in a little while, her silver disc would be obscured, and the path across the swamps and hillocks hard to find and dangerous to traverse; and so we turned away, and, in the darkness, stumbled slowly back to the road, and strolled through the gloomy avenue towards the village, and, glancing through the open doors, could see the red hearth-fires burning, and watch the little circles which had clustered round them as the twilight fell; and, in one poor hut, observed a goat reclining at the feet of its owner, staring with

him at the glowing ashes ; and then the moon, escaping from the dusky clutches of the clouds, once more moved calmly through the heavens; and, on a seat beneath the hedge of fuchsias, opposite the first hotel, we sat and mused, and listened to the washing of the waters, and glanced at the ripples of silver fire, and at the dim martello tower, and the vague islands, and the slumbering woods and solitary shores, and, in the glamour of the moonbeams and the shadow of the fuchsias, realized the meaning and the mystery of peace.

CHAPTER VII.

ANOTHER BATHING ADVENTURE—THE DANGERS OF THE COAST—A TRAGIC STORY—MASHING UNDER DIFFICULTIES—A DRENCHING DRIVE—BANTRY—A CHAT BY THE KITCHEN FIRE—JOHN BULL THREATENED—A SCAMPER THROUGH THE TOWN.

I had half arranged with the Anglo-Irish gentleman from the Cape to go for a swim before breakfast on the following morning; but, when the morning came, the weather was so unfavourable that I hesitated, thinking that he would have changed his mind. However, I at last decided to test the matter, and arose and sauntered through the grounds towards the bay. Here I met him, and found that he was already returning from his bath.

"I didn't think that you would have gone, the day is so dismal," I said. "How have you enjoyed your swim?"

"The place is not at all suitable," said he. "The bottom consists of mud, and I sank very nearly to my knees in it, and have cut my feet. Look!"

and he showed me his towels, with the stain of blood upon them.

"Where did you go?'

"Where the 'boots' told us; just at the bottom of the grounds.'

"Judging by your report, it does not seem very enticing," I remarked

"No; I shouldn't advise you to attempt to bathe at that point; but, if you will go through the plantation, and along the path, you will see a waterfall upon the right, and, just below the fall, there is a basin which I afterwards discovered. I should recommend you to try that! You will be able to have a good plunge there!"

With this we parted, I proceeding in the direction indicated, which led me through a thicket of dripping foliage, and he returning to the hotel. In a few moments, I heard the murmur of water, and saw a stream amid the trees to the right; and presently I reached the fall, a considerable volume of water being precipitated over a ledge of rock some yards in height into a deep rocky hollow, where it boiled and bubbled like a miniature whirlpool, and flowed with great rapidity towards a tiny creek, the shores of which were covered with vegetation as rich as any we had noticed at Killarney. Immediately in

front of me was a little island, and beyond were the misty waters of the bay. The basin could only be approached by crawling over some jagged rocks and boulders, covered with sea-weed of a particularly slimy and disagreeable character; and the current was running at such a pace that I first proceeded to the creek, with a view to examining its capacities, and satisfying myself as to the accuracy of the colonial gentleman's description. It was very shallow, and the bottom consisted, not of mud, but of a mass of sharp stones, so small as to be scarcely distinguishable from it. To reach deep water it was necessary to wade through these for some distance. But no sooner had I stepped from the shore than I realized the truth of what he had said; and found that not only was the bottom sharp and extremely unpleasant to the feet, but that it sank beneath them like quicksand; and so I desisted, and returned to the basin.

After an awkward scramble, I reached it. The air was chilly, and the sky overspread with clouds; and the stream looked rough indeed from the slippery rocks on which I stood. But I had made up my mind not to return until I had fulfilled my project; and the next moment the waves was swirling and eddying around me, and I was

striking out for the creek. It needed little effort. I was carried along like a cork, and, in a few seconds, was swimming calmly about in the bay, the current having gradually abated its velocity, until the motion became almost imperceptible ; whilst the water was almost tepid, just as at Kilkee, in spite of the rawness of the atmosphere. It was intensely enjoyable to float on with the stream, and then to turn and swim against it, the resistance increasing with every stroke, until, within the basin, it required all one's exertion to make any headway.

Unfortunately, my time was limited ; and the sky, which had so long been threatening, could not any longer contain itself. Heavy drops of rain were falling as I clambered over the weedy boulders again, and on to the high bank where I had left my clothes ; for there was not any shelter, and, notwithstanding the umbrella which I had erected over them, I could see that they would speedily be wet through. No sooner had I gained the bank than the shower developed into a perfect downpour. And now I was in a dilemma. As fast as I dried myself, the rain wet me again. I took up the umbrella, and, holding it with one hand, used the towel with the other.

The expedient was not particularly effective, nor was the attitude conducive to expedition ; and I soon saw that, before I could complete the drying process to my satisfaction, my clothes would be simply saturated. What was I to do ?—to cover the clothes with the umbrella and continue to wipe on until the rain ceased ; or to cover myself, and leave the clothes to take their chance ? At last, I compromised the matter by placing the latter at my feet, still keeping the umbrella over my head. This enabled me to shield them in some measure, and, with much difficulty, I succeeded in partially accomplishing my object. Then I donned my damp habiliments again as well as I was able, being greatly hampered in the operation by the use of the umbrella. The trees did not afford the slightest protection, and, in fact, were dripping to such an extent as only to add to my difficulties ; and when I finally stood "erect in self-respect" and a clammy suit of tweed, I discovered that, in spite of all my precautions, I was wet to the skin.

My bathing experiment might easily have ended in something worse than this, however. I once happened to hear, from a chance acquaintance in a Liverpool restaurant, a story which threw a vivid light upon the dangers of the coast.

He had, he said, on one occasion, gone for a swim, with a companion, to some particular point the name of which I cannot now remember. Moving carelessly to and fro in the glistening waters, they suddenly perceived that they were drifting out to sea. It at once dawned upon them that they had got into a current, and, noticing the swiftness of its flow, and appreciating their peril, they promptly turned and sought to reach the shore again. They were both fairly good swimmers, but they very soon discovered that they were not making any headway; and that, instead of this, they seemed to be slowly moving further and further from the beach, in spite of all their efforts. There were several persons watching them, but there was not any boat at hand; and, much alarmed and half bewildered, they looked around them, increased their exertions, and struggled with might and main to stem the treacherous stream. Their friends had evidently observed their critical position, and ran along and called to them in great anxiety; but they were quite unable to afford them any help. At this juncture it occurred to the narrator of the story that they were not moving in a straight line towards the open sea, but across the bay, towards a distant headland.

"Keep cool!" he said to his companion, who was

a weaker swimmer than himself. "Don't exhaust yourself by unnecessary struggles! We are being carried to the point, yonder; and, if we can keep afloat, we shall probably be landed there without much effort on our part!"

"Right you are, old fellow!" his friend replied; and, ceasing their futile efforts to resist the current, they contented themselves with yielding to its influence, and striking leisurely out in the same direction as that in which it appeared to be bearing them. Further and further from the beach they floated with increasing speed; but the point did not look much nearer yet, and the strokes of the weaker swimmer were growing gradually feeble.

"Come along!" called out his comrade encouragingly. "In a little time we shall be all right! It is clear that the current runs straight for the head!"

The other struggled bravely on, but his strokes were beginning to get very unsteady; and, observing this, his friend requested him to place one hand upon his shoulder. They could still descry the spectators, and noticed that they appeared be making towards the headland. If they could only retain their presence of mind a few minutes more they were almost certain to be borne to safety.

Suddenly, however, the exhausted swimmer's grasp relaxed, and he exclaimed, in a faltering voice, "I can't keep up any longer, old fellow, and, if I continue to do so, we shall both be drowned! Good-bye! I'm going to let go! Never mind me! Save yourself!"

Of course, he would not hear of this, although he felt that, thus encumbered, it was doubtful if he should be able to endure the strain much longer. But he manfully concealed his misgivings, struck out as powerfully as he could, and urged his friend to remain quite passive, and simply lean upon him lightly for support, and, in a short time, they would both be safe.

A few strokes more, and his comrade's grasp relaxed a second time; a change came over his face; he feebly murmured that his energy was spent, and once again he said good-bye. Again his companion begged him to take heart, and directed his attention to the nearness of the head; but over his own limbs a sense of impotence was slowly stealing, and it was as much as he could do to bear up, for his burden seemed to get heavier every moment. But still he struggled bravely.

"Stick fast!" he cried. "We shall soon be safe! For God's sake, don't give in!"

"I must!" came the answer. "My strength has quite left me! Good-bye!" and he felt the hand upon his shoulder finally slacken; and then a mist came over his eyes, and he knew that his friend was gone for ever. He was too exhausted to attempt to return, and he felt that, unless he reached the land in a few seconds more, a similar fate awaited him. Everything grew dark, and he was falling into a stupor; but he had just sufficient self-possession to struggle on an instant longer, encouraged by the friendly voices which were now distinctly audible; and then he felt himself sinking. But what was that? His feet had touched the bottom! The current had carried him into shallow water; he staggered blindly up the shelving beach; he heard a confused murmur; and then he lost all consciousness. But sympathetic hands were now stretched out to drag him from the treacherous clutches of the sea and to administer restoratives; and presently his strength returned, but with it the recollection of an experience that would haunt him to his dying day.

My "shower" bath was a wetting which did not compare for a moment with what was to follow; for when, having done my best to obviate its effects, and breakfasted, Mr. Richardson and I

mounted the coach for Bantry, the rain was falling in torrents, and the whole heavens were black with clouds; and both he and I and all the other occupants of the coach buttoned up our macintoshes, and drew our rugs around us, and brought our umbrellas into requisition, and prepared for the worst. But all of us were cheerful enough, in spite of the difficulties of the situation; and our Anglo-Irish friend, undeterred by the downfall, took his seat beside one of the American ladies whom I have mentioned, a graceful and agreeable girl, with whom he had struck up an acquaintance on the previous day, and seemed determined to make himself interesting, in blissful disregard of all the elements combined. But, as we rode through a thick and beautiful plantation, and then emerged upon the open road, and began to pass the scattered cottages of the peasantry, and to catch transitory glimpses of the open bay, and found that the outlook was restricted to a radius of about a hundred yards, and that our umbrellas were a hindrance rather than a help—that they wet our neighbours and did little to shelter us; and that, on the other hand, from each of those of the ladies and gentlemen in front and behind, a series of streams of water were descending upon our

devoted necks, and that, try as we would, we were all rapidly becoming wet to the skin, our jokes became less boisterous, and our laughter less loud ; the newly-married couple who had looked so honeymoonish on the previous day grew gradually glummer, and soon became too limp for sentiment ; and even the Anglo-Irishman from Africa began to relinquish his hopes of a romance. Indeed, he ceased to speak to the sallow young lady from America in whose smiles he had expected to bask except in monosyllables ; and gazed on things terrestrial with dripping moustache and dejected countenance, his fair companion having grown as dull as he ; whilst the jokes which still proceeded, at intervals, from some gentlemen at the back of the car were manifestly forced.

As my umbrella did not appear to be of the slightest use, I lowered it, at last, thinking that, as I could not manage to keep the rain off, I would, at least, take care to see whatever of interest there was along the road. But the atmosphere was so dull and heavy that scarcely anything was visible ; and, although the drive to Bantry is supposed to be extremely picturesque, I did not observe anything more striking than a misty bay ; a periodical plantation, and, in a

deep hollow, two large buildings with roofs of bright red tile, and a monster water-wheel between them, almost as high as the buildings themselves. Of course there were a multitude of wretched fields and miserable houses, and we noticed that the chimneys of the latter were made of straw instead of stone, the thatch being skilfully continued to a height of two or three feet above the roof, an ingenious kind of architecture which was new to us.

We were glad indeed that we had not arranged, as we had, at first, intended, to drive through Gougane Barra to Macroom, much as we should have liked to see the lonely mountain lakelet where the river Lee commences and St. Finbar once abode; but forty-three miles through a waterspout would have been rather too much of a joke. The ride to Bantry was scarcely a third of that distance, and we found it quite sufficient; and when, completely saturated, we approached the town, and drove right through it, past a water-mill abutting on the road, a yellow torrent rushing furiously towards it from the gentle slopes which we ascended just beyond, and by some smaller streams, and close beside a convent, covered with blue slate, and, at last,

pulled up at the Railway Station, we thanked our stars that it was over.

But there was not any opportunity of changing our clothes until we got to Cork; the Station was fireless and cheerless; the train was not yet due; and so Mr. Richardson and myself, finding that the rain was abating, and feeling that action was the best means of restoring the circulation of the blood and obviating the effects of our wetting, and that a glass of "the crathur" might appropriately supplement these precautions, walked back towards the town, paused at the first establishment for the sale of drinkables which we could discover, and, entering it, were sufficiently debauched to order "whiskies hot."

The apartment in which we stood was of a type which was now familiar. It contained a long counter, and some casks, and bottles, and glasses, and miscellaneous odds and ends, and was not by any means attractive; but, through an open door, I saw a large flagged room in which a fine turf fire was blazing. A well-built and good-looking young fellow, with a brown moustache, a ruddy face, and brawny limbs, was sitting at a table by the fire, with a piece of meat and some smoking potatoes, in their jackets, in front of him. He was apparently the son of the

woman who had served us ; and, as I rather envied him, under the circumstances, I told her that we were very wet, and asked if she would have any objections to our drying ourselves in the next apartment.

"Not in the laste!" said she. "But wont ye shtep upstairs? We've a room there?"

Oh, no! we preferred to stop below, if it were quite agreeable to her, and have a chat with our friend at the table. She readily assented to our proposition ; and so, standing on the flagged and fenderless hearth, we sipped our whisky, and did our best to be entertaining, and, of course, in a few seconds, managed to ask the stalwart diner what he thought about Home Rule. We found that he was a Nationalist, and were told that the vast majority of the people of the district were the same. We then endeavoured to impress him with the idea that, if Ireland wanted further concessions, she must prove that they were just, and not seek to win them through playing upon our fears ; that John Bull was always ready to see fair play, but that nothing under heaven would terrify him into conceding that which he believed to be wrong ; but he gruffly answered that what the Irish people wanted we should have to concede, and that, if we did not do it cheerfully, they would

make us do it willy-nilly. Evidently he was judging us by our "grand old men," and our despairing reviewers who have taken to politics, and our effusive biographers who would rather change their principles than lose their seats. These are but the bastards of the family. John Bull is made of sterner stuff than this. *

Our friend considered that fifteen years' purchase was an ample average price for the land of Ireland, and declared that the two great public necessities were manufactures and good laws ; but what the good laws were he did not specify. The people were peaceful here, he said ; and I should imagine that the League was not in a particularly vigorous condition, for he showed us, just across the way, a large stone hall which was intended for its accommodation, and had been in process of erection for four years, but was still unfinished, owing, apparently, to lack of funds. The building was a plain, large edifice, almost square, and without any pretensions to architectural beauty, or even to ordinary convenience, so far as we could judge ; but the interior was, as yet, quite incomplete, and the entire establishment had a deserted look, and appeared to be rather ashamed of itself.

* Or used to be.

Warm, and almost comfortable again, I occupied the brief interval that yet remained before the train was timed to leave in hurrying down into the town. By the side of the mill the stream was roaring with increasing fury, as if it panted to resume its labours, after weeks of drought, and send the great wheel whirling on its task again. The streets were almost deserted, but the crooked main thoroughfare, through which we had driven from Glengariffe was full of small shops, and among them had been pointed out to us the establishment of Mr. Lawrence Gilhooly, M.P. The Roman Catholics, the Protestants, and the Methodists each have churches in the town. The Protestant church overlooks the quay. At this two or three small ships were lying. Opposite is Whiddy Island, and, close at hand, the demesne of Lord Bantry. It was at Bantry that the French fleet whose misfortunes I have already catalogued was to have landed ; and, within the bay, to recall an item of more recent history, the black flag which a certain Captain Murphy had hoisted on his yacht, at the time of the Jubilee, was illegally seized by the authorities.

CHAPTER VIII.

OFF TO CORK—A TALK IN THE TRAIN—A REBEL CLERGYMAN AND A LOYAL PRIEST—"SHPAKIN' SHTEADY"—DUNMANWAY—"PINCE APIECE!"—THE GENTLEMAN WHO OFFERED TO "SHOW US SOME SHPORT"—THE EFFECT OF OUR TRAVELS—BANDON—DEAN SWIFT AND HIS SERVANT—WE MEET A FRIEND—A NIGHT IN THE REBEL CITY.

Making, by a short route, to the Station, and passing some wretched houses, on a spot which a few poor families were allowed to occupy rent free, I rejoined Mr. Richardson, and, entering the train, we left for Cork. There were in the carriage an old man and a boy, and I was not long in getting into conversation with them.

"What do you think about Home Rule?" I exclaimed, after a little preliminary skirmishing.

"We shall niver git it," said the man, "and it would do us a great dale of harrm if we did! Phat would the paple do if all the landlords lift the counthry? Who would spind iny money in

it at all? Sure, we've got good laws, and phat more do we want?"

This exactly contradicted the words of the patriot in the whisky shop.

"Are you Protestants?" I enquired.

"Sure, an' we are!"

"Are there many Protestants hereabouts?"

"Well, taking the disthrict through, they'll not number more than about one in forty," said the youth; "but in Bantry there's a good miny—about one fourth of the population!"

"Wherever we've travelled, and we've been over a great part of Ireland," said I, "we have met a large number of persons who are opposed to Home Rule—in fact, the bulk of the people with whom we have talked upon the subject are either entirely against it, or else appear to desire it merely as a means to settle the land question and promote manufactures This being so, how is it that the Unionists showed up so badly at the elections?"

"Well, it's thish way, sor! Of course we're in a minority, and, knowing that, even if we were all to vote, we could not win the election, and that we should be boycotted if we took part in it, miny of us think it betther not to vote at all!"

From the brawny fellow we had interviewed at dinner we had heard that the Protestant clergyman at Kenmare was "as great a Leaguer as iny in the counthry." As a set off to this, our present companions informed us that the Roman Catholic priest at Baltimore, a few miles away, had refused to allow the League to meet in his parish, and was an ardent Conservative. Indeed, it puzzles me to know how any Roman Catholic can be anything else, for the whole tendency of the Romish teaching is towards the recognition of authority and the repression of lawlessness; and the only curious feature about the Papal Rescript, which was soon afterwards to strike dismay into the hearts of the leaders of the Irish party, was that it came so late. It has been one of the most deplorable features in the agitation to find so many of the priests disposed to side with it; and it is well that the Pontiff has intervened, be it never so tardily, to save, if possible, the faith from scandal and the land from anarchy.

When I asked another young fellow, with a sandy moustache and a shallow intellect, as to whether it were not the fact that Protestantism and Catholicism were the two great political dividing lines, the Protestants, with few exceptions, being

against, and the Catholics, for the most part, in favour of the policy of Mr. Parnell, he said that I was "shpakin' shteady."

The weather was still damp, and we were not able to see a great deal of the surrounding country; but there was not anything of especial interest about it. The line runs through the Valley of the Ilen, and the scenery is of a moorland character. At Drumibeg, a branch line starts for Skibbereen, a place a few miles away well known in the annals of the moonlighter. At Dunmanway, a rubicund old dame was endeavouring, in a very leisurely and indifferent manner, to dispose of a basket of apples.

"How do you sell them?" we asked.

"Pince apiece!" was her reply.

And here a curious old customer with white locks, a very voluble tongue, a most agreeable demeanour, and mischief in his eyes, got into the carriage, and opened his remarks by telling us that "Ireland was the fairesht nation under God's heaven." Then, finding that we were disposed to be communicative, he launched off into political topics, and informed us that, "if the paple didn't agitate, they would be trampled upon like shnakes" and "pauperized"; and to give us a harrowing account of the arbitrary and diabolical

nature of the coercive laws under which Ireland was suffering at the hands of the British Government. He was much surprised when I informed him that what he said was entirely incorrect; and that, instead of describing the comparatively moderate act of the Marquess of Salisbury, he was describing the act of his great political idol, Mr. Gladstone; and, when I rallied him concerning that distinguished gentleman's right-about-face, and asked him whether it were possible to place much confidence in a politician so unstable, he declared it as his belief that Mr. Gladstone had been a Home Ruler all his life, but had kept his convictions to himself because he had not anyone to back him out in them, an opinion which Mr. Gladstone would probably regard as a very doubtful compliment.

But although the arguments which our friend adduced were about as reasonable as the assaults of Don Quixote on the windmills of La Mancha, he was a very jolly old fellow, and his Hibernian instincts came out in almost every word he said. When I told him how much better I felt for my holiday — "I can see it," said he; "sure, there's a bloom on yer face like the second growth of a potato!" and, as we drew up at Bandon, where he had to leave

us, he exclaimed: "I wish ye a plisant journey, gintlemin; and, much as ye have benefited by your travels thush far, may a double share of benefit be yours before ye return!" Then, having dismounted, he came to the carriage door and gave us some interesting information about the town, and expressed his great regret that we could not spare half an hour to accompany him, "for, if ye could," said he, "it's mesilf that would show ye some shport!" What would have been the character of the "shport" to which this antiquated joker would have introduced us I cannot say; but we were sorry that we were not able to take him at his word.

Bandon is pleasantly situated on the river of the same name. We had followed its course for some distance through a fertile country, passing, among other places, the village of Enniskean, where, close to the line, we saw a fine church and some pretty model cottages belonging to the Duke of Devonshire. The town is built upon the forfeited property of the chief, O'Mahony, who had assisted in the rebellion of the Earl of Desmond. It was founded in 1608 by Richard Boyle, afterwards Earl of Cork, the purchaser of a large part of the forfeited estate, and was well fortified; but the walls were

removed because the inhabitants rose in favour of King James the Second. It is said of Swift that, when he and his servant were entering the place, he, being somewhat in advance, inscribed upon the gate the words :

> "Jew, Turk, or Atheist,
> May enter here,
> But not a Papist.

The servant, coming up, perceived them, and, assuming them to be the work of his master, promptly added :

> "Whoever wrote this did write it well,
> The same is posted on the gates of hell."

To the right of the line, was a large distillery, and, on the river, were some fine corn mills ; whilst, across its dark waters, which are full of salmon, we could see a number of attractive mansions, charmingly situated amid trees and gardens. Half a mile outside the town we had passed Castle Bernard, the seat of the Earl of Bandon.

There was not anything which particularly excited our attention between Bandon and Cork. We observed an occasional ruin, and one or two pretty villages, notably Inishannon, a short

distance from the junction of the Brinny and the Bandon rivers; and, in this vicinity, a glimpse of Downdaniel Castle may be obtained. The land was good and fairly well cultivated, and many of the farms appeared to be extensive. As we neared the end of our journey, we glided through a series of cuttings, and crossed a wide, deep valley, and then the houses multiplied, the fields were left behind us, and, soon after five, we entered the Rebel City.

We sauntered past the Corn Exchange, and were making for the Parnell Bridge, which was called the Anglesea before it became the fashion to illustrate Irish patriotism by unnecessary interferences with municipal nomenclature, when I was lightly tapped upon the shoulder, and, on turning round, found myself face to face with a friend who was stopping in Cork, and with whom we had been expecting to spend the night. He had, it appeared, just got in from Macroom, and, half anticipating that we should arrive from Bandon about this time, had looked out for us. A Pole by birth, a Jew by religion, a traveller by trade, and a gentleman by nature, Mr. Franklin, as my friend was called, resided in Dublin, and was here on business. In the course of the year, he travelled from end to

end of Ireland, and knew it intimately; and he was the very one to show us all that it was possible to see of the Rebel City in the course of a flying visit. But, first, we accompanied him to the large boarding-house in which he was staying, did our best to obviate the effects of our wetting, and sat down to a huge steak each, during which a crowd of jokes were cracked, and he and I had much to talk about; for it was long since we had met, and our mutual acquaintances were many.

Among the items of information which he imparted was the fact that he had been present at the evictions at Ardagh, which had taken place about the time that we left home, and were the last of any importance before the new Land Act came into operation. He said that the tenants had submitted to their dispossession tamely, and that the law was enforced with little difficulty. He had also recently been to Castleisland, which he described as a large country town; and he gave us a vivid account of the close way in which every stranger who entered the place was watched, declaring that, from the moment he arrived to the moment he departed, he was scrutinized by scores of suspicious eyes; and that, wherever he went, he was quite unable to escape their espionage.

As luck would have it, there were, at the present time, three Irish girls among the patrons of the boarding-house—two of them very finely formed and rosy-cheeked and merry-hearted lasses—regular Nora Creinas, in fact: one a brunette, with cheeks like crimson roses—the other a blonde, as bewitching as ever met the eyes of two tired tourists at the end of a long day's journey. Our friend and they were old acquaintances; and, our appetites appeased, we were not long in arranging for a little dance and jollification as soon as he had shown us as much of Cork as it was possible to see before the darkness fell.

Accordingly we sallied forth into the fine streets of "the Capital of the South." Here, upon the site of an ancient pagan temple, St. Finbar established a monastery early in the seventh century. The Irish name of Cork, Corroch or Corcagh, signifies a swamp, and is singularly appropriate, as the place is built upon two marshy islands in the river Lee. It will be remembered that Spenser sings of

> "The spreading Lee, that, like an Island fayre,
> Encloseth Corke with his devided flood;"

and, scarcely a hundred years ago, the river ran

through the principal streets of the city. The seminary of St. Finbar is said to have been attended by 700 scholars, "who flocked in from all parts;" but the foundation of the existing city is commonly attributed to the Danes, who are supposed to have settled here about the year 1020, and erected walls and fortifications. In 1172 Dermot M'Carthy, the Prince of Desmond, surrendered Cork to Henry the Second, who appointed an English governor, and granted a charter to the inhabitants. The Desmonds, however, appear to have been dissatisfied with this arrangement. They repeatedly endeavoured to regain possession, and were finally successful. But their triumph was short-lived. John Bull was soon once more in the ascendant, and Shandon Castle was built in order to ensure his authority against all further assault. In 1493, Perkin Warbeck, "the impostor king," was royally received at Cork, in consequence of which, upon the collapse of the conspiracy, the mayor was hanged and beheaded, and the charter forfeited for over a century. In 1601, the English army who drove the Spaniards out of Ireland assembled here. Upon the accession of James the First the city refused to acknowledge him, but it was speedily reduced to submission. In the time of

Cromwell, however, Cork held out, not as a rebel, but as a loyal city. It was taken by surprise in 1649 ; and it is said that the conquering Protector cast the bells into cannon, and, on being rebuked for his sacrilege, responded with the grim jest that, as a priest had been the inventor of gunpowder, he considered that the best use for bells would be to turn them into *canons*. Again, in 1690, the place was besieged, this time by Marlborough in the interests of the Orange King ; but it was not until the war with France, at the close of the last century, that its real importance was recognized, and its splendid harbour became one of the most valuable naval strongholds in the Empire. Yet another circumstance connected with the history of Cork may be mentioned. It was here that William Penn, "the father of Pennsylvania," was converted to Quakerism, during a visit to look after some of the family property, by the preaching of Thomas Loe.

Though Cork was once ill-built, with narrow streets and wretched houses, it is now a charming town. The principal portion of it stands upon an island, and the north and south branches of the river are crossed by good bridges, and flanked by quays along the lower part of which great

steamers lay. In the company of Mr. Franklin, we sauntered down to these, and visited the South Mall, and the Grand Parade, and St. Patrick's Street. Beneath the two latter the waters of the river run, though there is not anything in their appearance to indicate the fact. Formerly an equestrian statue of George the Second was conspicuous upon the Parade ; but one night, some years ago, it suddenly disappeared and was discovered in the bed of the Lee. We were amazed at the magnificence of the churches, and banks, and hotels, and clubs, and offices, and shops which rose on every side, and at the life and activity which appeared to characterize the city. In St. Patrick's Street we saw a fine monument to the memory of Father Mathew, the great temperance reformer to whom I have already alluded, and whose centenary has just been celebrated. Would that his influence could be revived in a day when men prefer to sip their whisky rather than to pay their debts.

Across St. Patrick's Bridge, which is a continuation of the street of the same name, a thoroughfare called St. Patrick's Hill ascends with such abruptness that, as the darkness falls, the lamps along its footways seem to mingle with the stars, and, in the distance, to be scarcely distinguishable

from them. Close to the quays, we saw some fine tobacco and other warehouses, and one great roofless and windowless building which Mr. Franklin had recently seen in conflagration.

Before it grew quite dark, we had inspected most of the main streets, and seen the majority of the principal buildings, and we were greatly pleased with the place. It was distressing however, to reflect, that, here, disloyalty was so as rampant that, even upon an occasion so peaceful the Jubilee commemorations, black flags and other insulting tokens of disaffection had been displayed. But it is gratifying to know that, in spite of the noise and insolence of the rebel majority, there are, in Cork, a very large and influential minority of loyalists ; that a vigorous newspaper, known as the "Cork Constitution," circulates largely in the city and the surrounding counties, and does its best to serve as an antidote to the political poison which is disseminated by the Nationalist press ; and that the Cork branch of an organization so aggressively loyal as the Primrose League has over 5000 adherents. If there are this number of pronounced and active Conservatives, how vastly larger must the entire loyal population be ?

Returning to the boarding-house, we danced for some time with much spirit, "and all went

merry as a marriage-bell ;" and then, desisting for awhile, the hours flew by to music, and our fair friends favoured us with several patriotic songs. First they gave us "The Wearing of the Green."

"Faith, if the constabulary hear us, we shall be locked up, I suppose!" said the light-haired lassie with a smile. "We're under coercion now!"

But the fact did not appear to trouble them much, and they next proceeded to sing "St. Patrick's Day" and "God Save Ireland," Mr. Franklin, Mr. Richardson and myself joining in the choruses. And then, to salve my conscience, and prove myself as proud of my country as they appeared to be of theirs, and also with the wish to test the value of the Nationalist professions of loyalty, I said, "Now let us have 'God Save the Queen!'" At this, a sudden gloom appeared to fall upon the company, and my proposal met with a reception which was absolutely chilling.

"Sure, we won't be afther singing that at all!" said the dark-haired maiden emphatically ; and I was about to suggest something else when the wife of the proprietor of the establishment, a quiet, respectable, industrious, and devout Irish-

woman of middle age, appeared. She was herself a warm Nationalist ; but, on hearing of my request, quietly remarked, "And pwhy not ? Sure, I want iverybody to be saved !" This was an indefinite way of putting the matter which said more for her hospitable wish to make us feel at home than for her devotion to the august lady who presides over the destinies of the Empire. However, the blonde was good-natured enough to hint that my suggestion should be adopted ; but there was not a spark of enthusiasm in her tone, and it was evident that her words were prompted solely by a sense of courtesy ; and, as none of her friends seemed inclined to fall in with it, the proposal fell to the ground ; and so we drifted back to the songs of Ireland, and ended by a cheery conversation round a glowing fire.

The owner of the boarding-house also was a Nationalist, of a gruff but civil type, and spoke with such a stentorian and husky voice, and with such a terrible brogue, as to make it almost impossible to understand what he was saying. He likewise kept a large provision shop, and appeared to do a roaring trade among the poorer class of customers. In spite of his ardent Nationalism, he admitted that there were "a dale of Protestants

and Unionists" in the Rebel City ; and, staying at the house, was an old Irish lady who, although of very humble circumstances, was a Conservative of the most advanced and uncompromising type ; and who stoutly declared that, if she were in the place of the Premier, she would be twice as stern as he, adding, although she was not, apparently, connected with the landed interest in any way herself, that she would make the tenants "pay ivery halfpenny they owed."

Before retiring, we had another run round the city, our companion introducing us to some of the amusements of the younger citizens, and affording us an opportunity of seeing the place by gas-light. We reached the theatre, a pretty large and substantial building, in time to see the "Confusion" which had been occasioned by a fine pug dog satisfactorily dissipated by a London Company who were playing to a house half full. The curtain fell, and we listened for the National Anthem ; but it was evidently not more popular here than it had been at the boarding-house, and, immediately upon the conclusion of the play, the audience dispersed. This, said Mr. Franklin, was the invariable custom.

As we were sauntering slowly along one of the main streets, a soldier dashed past us in his

shirt sleeves. He was closely followed by about a dozen other soldiers ; and, in their wake, a surly crowd was rapidly forming.

"Halloa, here's a row!" said Mr. Franklin. "Let us see what is going on ; but be careful! Street rows in Cork are often dangerous!"

The gentleman in the shirt sleeves made up a narrow side street at the best speed which his somewhat shaky limbs permitted, and his pursuers quickly gained on him. In a few moments, he was in their grasp, and surrounded by an excited and increasing multitude. As a *mêlée* seemed probable, Mr. Franklin advised us to keep in the background, fearing that some of the crowd would recognize us as Englishmen, and that they might not, in their excitement, treat us with overmuch ceremony. But I could not resist the temptation to witness the scene from close quarters. The flying warrior was, I learnt, a soldier who was out of barracks beyond the proper time, indulging in a drunken spree, and had been pounced upon by the picket ; but he did not appear to be in the least inclined to yield either to their entreaties or their threats, or even to their muscular exertions. He cursed them with great vigour, and then "sot down in the mud," in the expressive phrase of Elijer Goff ; and, when they tried to raise

him, he kicked and fought and struggled in a manner which, to me, was not a little amusing. Many of the crowd, however, unmistakably sympathized with him in his insubordination. But all the pot-valiant efforts of this drunken hero were of none effect; for, after a protracted resistance, he was taken into custody, and his brother warriors prepared to march him off to the barracks. He still obstinately refused to budge an inch, and, indeed, it took the whole twelve, much to the gratification of a number of the onlookers, to move him; and then they had to positively drag him along through the slush which was lying thickly in the crowded thoroughfares.

Seeing that he was at last fairly in the clutches of the twelve soldiers, and doomed, in spite of all resistance, to be either hauled or carried to the barracks, the multitude began to disperse. One of them, a low-looking young fellow of five and twenty or so, noticing my English accent, turned suddenly from the prostrate gentleman who was being trailed in this unceremonious manner to his destination, and, gazing up into my face with a leer, ejaculated gruffly: "And that'sh phat we'll do for the b—— whole of yez before we've done!"

CHAPTER IX.

ST FINBAR'S CATHEDRAL — QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY —THE ANGLO-IRISHMAN AGAIN—A CHAT WITH A PRIEST—YOUGHAL—THE HOUSE OF RALEIGH —HOW A DEAD MAN'S OATH WAS ANSWERED— THE CHURCH AND ITS ORIGIN—THE STORY OF THE PONSONBY ESTATE—THE CLOCK TOWER AND ITS KEEPER.

Before we left, in the morning, for Youghal, I had time to stroll across the South Branch of the Lee, and past the Constabulary Barracks, which is surrounded by a very lofty wall, to St. Finbar's Cathedral, a noble edifice in white stone, with three magnificent spires, one—the largest of the three—at the end which fronts the Barracks ; the other two, each large, but smaller than the first, at the end remote from it. Their style was in the highest degree symmetrical, and the carving and the gilt emblazonry upon the walls were very effective. The Cathedral was built in the middle of the last century, upon the site of the ruins of a structure

much more ancient. I was not able to obtain admission, as the hour was early ; but, through an opening in the wall, occasioned by some alterations which were in progress, I managed to obtain a faint glimpse of a very beautiful interior.

From the Cathedral, I rambled on to Queen's College, passing a fine convent, on my right, some distance from the road ; also a number of poor houses, but much better than the poorer houses in the majority of the Irish towns we had visited ; and a large mansion concerning which I heard, from a juvenile citizen, a somewhat curious story. The contract for the construction of it had, he said, been given to an Englishman ; and, in consequence of this, it had been necessary, while the work was in progress, to surround the place with soldiers.

The College lies in an extensive garden, planted with a great variety of trees and shrubs and flowers, all scientifically arranged and elaborately labelled. It consists of a large limestone building in the Gothic style of architecture, which forms three sides of a quadrangle, and stands upon the spot once occupied by Gill Abbey, established by Gill Ada, Bishop of Cork, in the seventh century. It is, as I have stated in a previous volume, affiliated with the colleges at

Belfast and Galway, and is open to persons of all denominations.

The train for Youghal left the Glanmire Station, which lies across the North Branch of the river, to the right of St. Patrick's Hill, a little after ten. As we were standing on the platform with Mr. Franklin, whose business engagements prevented him from accompanying us, we came across the Anglo-Irishman again, and had the pleasure of his society for the greater part of the day. In the carriage we entered, a priest was seated—an open-faced gentlemanly, agreeable fellow who conversed freely on the political situation. He said that, personally, he did not think the settlement of the land question and the development of Irish industries would do away with the necessity for Home Rule; nor did he believe, as our colonial friend argued, that the grant of an Irish Parliament would destroy Irish credit and scare away English capital. Like nearly every Home Ruler with whom we had come into contact, he repudiated all desire for separation; but he seemed quite astonished to learn that tenants have to suffer all the world over; and that in England, in South Africa, and in Ireland alike, certain laws of political economy operate the defiance of which may lead to the most disastrous results. As he continued to harp

upon the grievances of the Irish tenant, I asked him what was his remedy, but he did not attempt to suggest any; and, when I tried to show him, as I had tried to show the gentleman in the train from Dublin to Ballybrophy, that to fix a fair rent in accordance with Irish ideas was practically impossible, he appeared to be quite unable to furnish an answer to my objections. He did not at all appreciate my references to Grattan and the Irish statesman of the past, and my comparison of these to the latter-day apostles of Irish liberty. He declared that Mr. Davitt, Mr. Dillon, and Mr. O'Brien, to whom I had specially referred, were, in his opinion, "the most honest of men." This I had not disputed, if it were mere honesty of purpose he meant; but that quality, admirable as it is in these degenerate days, is not the only test of statesmanship; and, if he meant honest in its other significance, I should, with the No Rent Manifesto before me and the Plan of Campaign in my mind's eye, have had a considerable amount of difficulty in agreeing with him.

The road was comparatively uninteresting, winding through pleasant grassy fields and slopes, with occasional glimpses of the harbour and sundry stoppages, to the terminus at Youghal.

Thence we followed the shores of a wide bay, and, presently, turning inwards, passed some good lodging-houses, and a lighthouse, and a level stretch of beach well-suited for bathing, and, of course, discovered a convent, and found ourselves, in due season, in a straggling street a mile or more in length, without any offshoots of importance, spanned, about midway, by an edifice surmounted by a Clock Tower. There were some good shops and buildings in this main street, and, on the right, several by-lanes led to the quay. Beyond the Clock Tower was another tower, very ancient and curious, and now used as a corn store.

Youghal is an interesting old town. It received a Charter in the reign of John, and has sustained many sieges. In 1579, the inhabitants, who were loyal, defended it against the Earl of Desmond. Sir Walter Raleigh sailed to their assistance, and soon succeeded in stamping out the rebellion. He received the Desmond estates as a reward for his exertions, and, in 1588, was elected mayor of the town. Adjacent to the churchyard, is the house in which he resided, and where Edmund Spenser enjoyed his hospitality prior to embarking with him for England, in order to superintend the publication of "The Faerie Queene." It was in the garden of this Elizabethan

mansion, with its tall, yellow, ivy-covered chimneys and antiquated air, that Sir Walter is said to have planted the first potato. The house itself is rich in relics of the age of Elizabeth, and is hallowed on account of a host of associations ; and we much regretted to learn that Sir John Pope Hennessy, the present proprietor, who was at home, had given strict orders that no one was to be admitted. We saw him subsequently, driving out in a small wicker pony carriage. He had recently returned from the Mauritius, where his experiences as a colonial governor had not been by any means of the most agreeable character ; but they did not seem to have affected him much. He was a florid, white-haired old man, with a resolute expression which appeared to indicate that he was quite prepared to hold his own with anybody.

As our wish to see the interior of the house could not be realised, we had to be content with scrambling up a high wall, and peering into the garden, and vaguely wondering which was the identical spot that was first honoured by the famous bulb upon the produce of which Paddy has since so largely subsisted ; and in what corner the favourite of Good Queen Bess had been wont to puff the fragrant weed, and in which

of the leafy nooks we gazed upon "the poet's poet" had dreamed his deathless dreams.

But we had time to inspect a tomb beneath the wall which separated the garden from the graveyard, and under which, according to the old lady who had taken us in charge, were lying the ashes of a certain doctor whom many of the townsfolk remembered, and who had been accustomed to emphasize his utterances by the oath, "May no blade of grass ever grow upon my grave!" Some forty years had passed since this gentleman's demise, and seeds had been sown and sods had been planted above the place where he reposed, but a curse had seemed to linger there. The seeds had always decayed, and the sods had always withered; and, to-day, the soil was lying, dank and dark and dismal, without a solitary weed to relieve its sombreness.

Youghal is also famous as the headquarters of Cromwell during his memorable sojourn in the south of Ireland. The Church originated in a Franciscan abbey which was founded in 1224 by Maurice Fitzgerald. It is said that he had, at first, intended to build a castle, and had sent money by his son to enable the builders to drink his health. But, instead of giving them the money, the son loaded them with

expressions of contempt; and, to punish his pride, an abbey was built instead. The Church has been restored, and contains an ancient bishop's throne, a very old oak communion table, and an extraordinary monument to the memory of the first, commonly known as the Great, Earl of Cork, in which he is represented as reclining, clothed in the peculiar and gaily-coloured costume of the age, with his two wives kneeling, one on either side of him, in equally resplendent robes, and, underneath, the figures of his children, those who died young being distinguished by peculiarities in the carving. The general appearance of the monument, which covers the greater part of one of the walls of the south transept, and is gaudily illuminated, is very singular. Many other quaint old tombs are pointed out, including those of the celebrated Countess of Desmond whose decease was caused by a fall from a cherry tree at the astonishing age of one hundred and forty; and who, at the age of one hundred, is said to have walked from Bristol to London and danced at Court. The edifice was filled with objects that appealed to the imagination of the visitor; and, as we rambled to and fro in it, and listened to the tales of eld which were reverently imparted

to us by the respectable dame who had taken us in charge, we seemed to be transported to the time of the Tudors, and to have forgotten for awhile that the bustling, workaday world was going about its business a few yards away just the same as usual.

The wall of the town runs in the rear of the churchyard, and forms its boundary upon that side ; and, ascending one of the towers which are still standing, and by the side of which a number of cannon were planted, exactly as of old, and in a position to enable them to fire right above the intervening houses, and prevent the approach of an enemy by the narrow estuary upon the other shore of which we saw the pleasant fields of Waterford, we were able to obtain as good a view of the locality as it was possible to desire. The wall was very thin in places, and parts of it had evidently crumbled and fallen inwards ; but it ran on towards the Clock Tower at a substantial elevation ; and I was surprised to find so much of it, and that it was in a state of such comparative preservation.

Our guide stated that there were about 800 Protestants in Youghal, and that the people were living together very amicably, in spite of their different opinions on religion and politics ; but

she said that the Irish were "a strange, wild race," the ways of which it was difficult to understand, and the wishes of which it was hard to meet.

And round the town there stretched the famous Ponsonby estate, which has since been brought so prominently before the notice of the public. The estate covers an area of 10,571 statute acres; and Mr. Talbot Ponsonby, the owner, has spent over £15,000 in improving it. For a long time he resided on it for several months in the year, and, upon the occasion of his first visit, fifty of the leading tenants signed an address in which they said that "the name of Ponsonby" was "traditionally revered in" that "part of the country, being associated in the recollections and impressions of the people with all that" was "exalted, honourable and generous." The rents had not been raised within the memory of the oldest occupant; and when, in 1872, a re-valuation was made, the gross rental was not appreciably altered. Leases of 31 years were offered, but not many accepted them. On the passing of the Land Act, only 27 tenants actually went into Court; whilst 18 had their rents adjusted by mutual arrangement outside. The reductions averaged 12 per

cent. A remission of 20 per cent. upon non-judicial and 10 per cent. upon judicial rents was granted in 1885, and offered in 1886, when the agent was authorized, in the case of everybody who paid one year's rent, less the abatement, to cancel all arrears accrued since 1881; and he was empowered to make a larger abatement still in special cases. This offer was refused, the Plan of Campaign was inaugurated, and reductions of 35 and 25 per cent. respectively were demanded. For two years Mr. Ponsonby did not receive any rent whatever. In November, 1888, the tenants having expressed a wish to come to terms, he offered to sell the estate for a net sum of £110,000. Canon Keller, on behalf of the tenants, made a proposal tantamount to an offer of £88,500. In order to settle the matter, Mr. Ponsonby subsequently promised concessions in regard to the arrears which had accumulated in the meantime which Mr. Justice Gibson characterized as "extravagantly liberal," stating that he could not himself have seen his way to grant them; but the League were obdurate, the tenants were held in check, and, face to face with the conspiracy, Mr. Ponsonby would probably have been forced to succumb, and sell the property at a ruinous sacrifice, when Mr.

A. H. Smith-Barry, M.P. the chairman of the Cork Defence Union, came to the rescue.

This was the beginning of the trouble which has culminated in the New Tipperary. That anything so intolerable should be permitted as for the landlords to unite in self-preservation was not to be heard of for a moment. Tenants might associate to deprive them of their dues; the aid of boycotting might be invoked, and the benevolence of America might be tapped to force them to their knees; but, let them lift a finger to protect themselves against the common foe, and all the resources of the agitation must be employed to crush them. Mr. Smith-Barry was admittedly a good landlord. His own tenants had not any quarrel with him. But it was requisite to punish him for his chivalry. Combination, which was noble when the object was to fleece the owners of the soil, was base and black and cowardly when prompted by the wish to thwart the plan. And hence the men of Tipperary were instructed to withhold their rents. The mutterings of mutiny were naturally heard, but so well have the people of Ireland been trained to do the bidding of their leaders, and so terrible has been the vengeance that has descended upon those who have dared to disregard them, that the bulk obeyed;

the farmers left their land, and the shopkeepers forsook their premises ; the business part of the town was given up to spies and publicans and corner-boys ; and, in the wooden sheds erected by the architects of their misfortune, the people tried to feel heroic, and to forget that the whole civilized world was laughing at them. The few who were plucky enough to refuse to leave their homes at the dictation of an irresponsible authority have been almost ruined ; their trade has fallen off, their customers have been watched and threatened, their windows have been broken, bombs have been exploded on their doorsteps, and various other patriotic devices have been tried to bring "them into line." And still the New Tipperary does not flourish ; it has been a continuous drain upon the resources of the Nationalist exchequer ; the war-chest is empty ; and once again the everlasting hat goes round and Irish madness hopes to thrive on Yankee charity.

Though all was outwardly peaceable at Youghal just now, the district was simmering with disaffection. It was not long since a fierce attack had been made upon the residence of the bailiff who had served a legal notice on Canon Keller, the parish priest ; since scouts were daily on the watch

for the messenger who was expected with the warrant for his arrest, in consequence of his refusal to give evidence in a case of bankruptcy resulting from the troubles on the adjacent estate, upon the ground that it would be betraying the confidence reposed in him by virtue of his priestly office; since a young man named Hanlon had been killed in a conflict with the police; and since the Canon had been conveyed to Dublin as a prisoner, amid exciting demonstrations of popular sympathy; and, even now, a series of evictions were in prospect, and the Government preparing silently to grapple with the Plan.

On our way back, we entered the grim old tower which was serving as a corn store. To apply this fine ruin to a purpose so extremely unromantic seemed to me to be little better than sacrilege; but utility appears to be the great law of the age, and after all, castles are so numerous in Ireland that they become a bit monotonous, and "variety is charming," even if it present itself in the garb of a dusty flour dealer where one's imagination would have pictured a stalwart knight on guard.

By the time we had snatched a hasty lunch, in a musty old room, in an antiquated hotel, with a dusty, disused grand piano, made nearly a

hundred years before, upon the landing, the river boat for Cappoquin was almost due, and my companions made at once for the quay ; whilst I seized the few minutes which still remained to climb the steps that led to the walls and the Clock Tower, which was connected with them, and, as I have already mentioned, formed an arch across the leading thoroughfare. I pushed a door ajar, and found myself in a room which was evidently inhabited ; and, through a second door, I saw some crockery, and a table, and sundry other household utensils, and began to perceive that I was an intruder. The next moment, an old woman appeared, and stared at me with manifest astonishment ; but, on hearing my apologies and learning the object of my visit, she conducted me to the topmost story of the building, informing me, on the way, that it had formerly been used as a prison, and that several of the rooms she was showing me had served as cells ; that she was the gaoler's wife, and, on his death, had been left in charge, and allowed a small pension, in consideration of the execution of certain daily duties, including the care of the clock, the lighting of a lamp at night, and the ringing, at intervals, of a

bell which was suspended above the street. The vacant rooms were now unoccupied, save one, in which the band of the local branch of the National League were permitted to practise ; and they were, for the most part, untidy, owing, as far as I could gather, to the rejoicings on the release of Canon Keller, in consequence of an informality in the warrant of committal. The church of this refractory priest was a prominent object from the prison. The town was, however, very quiet, at present, the old lady said ; and she likewise testified that, although the people were much divided in opinion, there was little to disturb the serenity of its ancient streets and by-ways. She little thought how soon the peace of Youghal was again to be broken ! I found her extremely civil and obliging, and felt in my pocket with a view to giving her the tip which her courtesy so well deserved ; but I only happened to have two or three coppers available at the moment. I expressed my obligations, and offered them, as delicately as I was able, explaining my dilemma ; and, instead of cursing me, as previous experience had led me to expect, she warmly thanked me, declaring that it did not matter, and doing me the unexpected honour of

informing me that she "liked my face," and impressing upon me that, when next I came to Youghal, I must not fail to visit her again. These compliments were embarrassing. I was not accustomed to that kind of thing ; so I promised to comply with her request, and blushingly prepared to take my departure. Then, reiterating her invitation, she took me by the hand, and, to complete my confusion, exclaimed :

"Well, good-bye, my darlin,' and God bless you !"

And all this for threepence !

CHAPTER X.

"THE RHINE OF IRELAND"—A PLEA FOR LIBERTY—THE SHADOW OF MITCHELSTOWN—CAPPOQUIN—HOW TO TELL A UNIONIST—A POLITICAL FIREBRAND—A SECOND DARGLE—WE REACH MOUNT MELLERAY—ANOTHER NIGHT AMONG THE MONKS OF THE ORDER OF LA TRAPPE.

My friends were anxiously awaiting my arrival, fearing lest the * "Avonmore" would start before I got on board; but I found that I

* This steamer affords a further illustration of the methods of Nationalism. As the existing difficulty developed, it had to be taken off, the passengers being actually ordered, one day, to come ashore, for the simple reason that the steamer was owned by persons who were obnoxious to the local leaders. Boycotting became rampant in the neighbourhood. Not only was the steamer stopped, but the Protestant shopkeepers were singled out as enemies to the cause and well-nigh ruined. The trade of the town has been most seriously affected; and, in consequence of the adoption of the Plan and the evictions to which it led, the streets are full of loafers, living upon the funds of the League. Mr. T. W. Russell declares that the entire expenditure which the League incurred, in 1889, in order to maintain the agitation here, could not have been much less than £20,000; and that, as the estate is now grazed by a syndicate, Mr. Ponsonby is probably better off than before. Indeed, the persons who usually suffer in these foolish conflicts are not the landlords, but the tenants: and the men who pose as their friends, and lead them into courses contrary alike to law and equity, are really their worst enemies.

was in ample time. There were not many passengers, but the sight of four or five gentlemen with peaked hats, and cornets, and trombones promised music of some sort or other upon the journey; the day was fine; and, as we steamed slowly from the quay, and left the town, conspicuous upon the slightly elevated land to the west, we began to anticipate our sail with feelings of unusual pleasure; and when the funnel, which worked on hinges, was suddenly dropped for a moment, and we glided under the long, low bridge that links the sister counties, Cork and Waterford, and is, with the approaching causeways, more than half a mile in length; when the funnel rose again, and we found ourselves upon the actual "Rhine of Ireland"—or, as Spenser sang three hundred years ago:

> "Swift Awniduff, which of the English man
> Is cal'de Blacke-water,"

we were not long in owning that it fully merited its reputation; and that probably, in the entire limits of the United Kingdom, there is not a more beautiful stream.

Soon we saw the ruins of Temple Michael, a castle erected by the Knights-Templar, and of the Abbey of St. Molanfide, founded in 501, in which the body

of Raymond le Gros, a companion of Strongbow, is supposed to be interred. In this locality the little river Toora discharges itself. And then we came to the charming mansion of Ballinatray ; and moved by verdurous lawns and dark rich woods of pine and fir, until the stream expanded, and we passed into the beautiful Broad of Clashmore ; while, far away ahead, above the woods and pasturelands, a purple peak rose gracefully.

A little further on, a crumbling, ivy-covered ruin is seen upon a low rock to the left, and by the very brink of the water. This is Strancally Castle. The river is said to be of enormous depth just here, and to be connected with the Castle by an underground passage known as the Murdering Hole, in which the tyrants of a vanished day are supposed to have cast the bodies of their victims. Immediately ahead is another castle of the same name—a modern edifice, adorned with towers and battlements and bartizans, and peeping proudly from a maze of trees ; and close at hand, a tower-like structure rises which was intended as a police station, and built for its protection. Beyond, the river Bride flows gently from the woods and fields ; and now, distinctly visible afar, we traced

the rugged outlines of the Knock-me-le-down Mountains.

At Camphire, on the left, a little quay, with trees surrounding it and not a house in sight, attracts attention; and then, upon the other bank, an isolated precipice, tremendous in its altitude, and fearful in its perpendicularity. Upon the very edge of this, amid a mass of shining foliage, Dromana Castle stands, a tiny willow-covered isle in front of it; and here the little river Finisk pays its tribute to the mightier stream.

It was at Dromana Castle that the first cherry tree in the kingdom is supposed to have been planted, thanks to the enterprise of Raleigh, whom a grateful nation might well have chapleted with potato leaves instead of laurels, and cherry blooms instead of bays; and there also, by a singular coincidence, the old lady who died at the age of 140, owing to her fall from a cherry tree, is said to have been born. The present proprietor is, I believe, Lord Stuart de Decies.

Continuing our course, we soon descried the ancient castle of Tourin, and, in the same vicinity, the modern mansion of the same name. The latter is the seat of Sir Richard Musgrave, whose father first tested the navigable capacities of the Blackwater. In front, soft hills arose,

adorned with trees, and intersected by delightful vales, and, frowning over all, far watchers on the horizon's verge, the purple summits of the mountains. In the immediate foreground lies the little town of Cappoquin, its white street nestling along the side of the nearer and less elevated slopes, with the trees and gardens of Sir Richard Keane to the rear of it ; and, to the left, the arches under which the river flows from the west, to form a right angle, at the western extremity of the town, by turning suddenly southwards.

Language fails me to adequately describe the increasing attractions of the sail along this fascinating stream and through the heart of this enchanted land. There was not a yard of it which was not beautiful. The ever-varying channel, now as wide as a lake, and now as narrow as a canal—flowing on in pleasant reaches, or turning, at a moment's notice, round a sudden corner into some new scene of loveliness—sometimes embosomed in green meadows, but oftener in hills completely cloaked from base to crown with dark blue woods of pine and fir—one instant winding through a scene of perfect solitude, and leading us, the next, by mossgrown ruins, or beneath the very walls of some proud habitation of to-day, with velvet

lawns and gleaming shrubberies and gardens rich as strips of rainbow; affording us, anon, a distant glimpse of some white farm upon the hills, or some sweet tributary stealing gently to the sea; or of the distant mountains, carved in exquisite relief against the background of the radiant sky, where blue and gold and snow were mingled—the ripple of the waters, as the steamer parted them—the music of the band, with which the plashing wavelets blended, softening the harsher notes, and rounding them to perfect harmony—all these float like some dream of Fairyland across my mind, and in my memory the name of "Awniduff" is woven like a sunny spell.

Here, as at Killarney, it seemed a desecration to introduce the discordant element of politics, and, for the greater part of the journey, I sat and mused in silence as the panorama glided slowly by; but, from a brief conversation which I had with one of the crew, I learnt that the district was, for the moment, as tranquil as it looked. He pointed out to us, however, two farms, one of them of 104 acres, from which the tenants had been evicted, and which had since remained unlet, the people being afraid to occupy them, lest "the terror by night" should overtake

them, and exact from them the penalties which, in John Bull's Other Island, attach to the man who has the courage to exercise his lawful rights, and defy the petty edicts of the village tyrants who, in the name of Liberty, have laden Ireland with a burden as heavy as any of the burdens which the Saxon Oppressor has imposed upon her in the vanished "centuries of wrong." The children of the sister isle, alas! have shown us what it is to be :

> "Slaves by their own compulsion! In mad game
> They burst their manacles, and wear the name
> Of Freedom, graven on a heavier chain;"

and not the least noble of the duties of the Unionist Party is to rid them of that chain; and to enable them to go about their lawful business without let or hindrance, "none daring to make them afraid."

I likewise had a conversation, just before we reached Cappoquin, with a typical Tipperary man, who was coming up from Youghal with the intention of proceeding to Mitchelstown, at which, on the following Thursday, Mr. William O'Brien was to be tried for his action in regard to the dispute upon the Kingston estate. Now Mr. Richardson and I had proposed to visit

Mitchelstown, if practicable, as we were wishful, not only to see the caves in the vicinity, but also to examine the elaborate preparations that had been made by many of the people to resist the evictions, which we had been expecting to commence ever since we had landed in Ireland, and which we had set out upon our journey, at this particular juncture, with the avowed intention of witnessing, as everybody anticipated a repetition of the scenes that had recently been enacted at Bodyke. We had arranged to alter, if necessary, all our other arrangements sooner than miss them ; and, although they had been deferred, we had still made up our minds to see the place, and chat with its inhabitants, though neither of us then anticipated, for a moment, that, in just another week, the eyes of the world would be riveted upon that obscure little country town, whose name we could not find upon our atlases, and concerning the position of which we were to find that, even yet, we were some ten or twelve miles in error.

As soon as ever I mentioned the name of Mitchelstown to my Tipperary friend, he asked, with much interest : " Are ye going to meet William O'Brien ? " evidently jumping to the conclusion that we were English sympathizers

with that individual, and desirous, like Mr. Brunner, of purchasing a cheap notoriety by upholding the law-breakers against the law-makers, and winning from an excited multitude of ignorant Irishmen the applause which is denied to gentlemen of that ilk by all sober and intelligent Englishmen, Scotchmen, Welshmen and Irishmen alike. I told him that I was not, and I had a mind to tell him that, for William O'Brien or anyone else who presumed to break the law, I had only one remedy to propose, and that was picking oakum ; but I managed to restrain myself, and, on making enquiry, was greatly disappointed to discover that Mitchelstown was more than double the distance we had imagined ; and that to visit it would involve our missing not only Mount Melleray, the famous Trappist monastery, but likewise, in all probability, the boat for Liverpool upon the following day, by which it was absolutely necessary that we should return.

We were therefore reluctantly compelled to abandon the project ; but I found that my informant had himself come up from Youghal in order to be present at the great meeting ; and he closed his remarks upon the subject, which were a little mixed, by the sinister observation, which

acquired a lurid significance in the light of subsequent events, that "Tipperary men" were ready for anything, and did not care "whether they lived or died." Evidently he expected a row; but whether he took part in the attack upon the police which led to such disastrous results, and whether he gave or received any injuries in the bloody affray which followed the rash and reckless and defiant gathering I cannot tell.

We have been repeatedly exhorted by Mr. Gladstone to "Remember Mitchelstown!" It would be vastly better if we were to endeavour to forget it. There is little in the incident that is creditable to anyone concerned. But, at least, we should remember it as it really was. If the police were wrong in endeavouring to force a way to the platform for their reporter, the mob were wrong in resisting them; and, if batons were used, it must be borne in mind that it was in response to blackthorns. If they were to blame in retreating to their barracks and firing on the crowd, the crowd were to blame in hurling stones at them, and forcing them to fly for their lives. It is bad enough to think that three men were killed by the discharge; but it must not be forgotten that the police allege that

they fired in self-defence, and that fifty-five of them had been injured and one of them maimed for life in the course of the encounter. And, if the magistrates and officers in charge appear, to some extent, to have lost their heads, the men who sat upon the jury to investigate the case betrayed such a flagrant spirit of partisanship, and such an utter disregard of the most elementary principles of fair play as to make the whole enquiry farcical. Nor must it be forgotten that if three men were slain by the police at Mitchelstown, under the *régime* of Mr. Balfour, considerably more were slain by the police at Belfast in the time of Mr Morley.

The fact is, these occasional fatalities, sad as they are, have little bearing on the question. Even the Irish constabulary are only human; and the marvel is, to me, that, in the face of overwhelming odds and bitter provocation, they so seldom err. The loss of human life is always lamentable; but the life of a policeman is as sacred as the life of a peasant, and the maintenance of law imperative. At whatever cost, and under all circumstances, it is the duty of the Government of a free country to insist upon obedience to its authority; and, if Mr. Gladstone would exhort the public to remember this, he

would be doing them a vastly greater service than by bringing up so frequently a garbled story of a very dubious event.

By this, we had sailed through several pretty islands, and were nearing Cappoquin. There were still the same green slopes and dark pine-woods, and the noble line of mountains in the background; but the shining river glided eastward now, and disappeared; and a quay was visible, and, stretching along the wooded hill beyond it, was a white and winding street, with a smiling park and mansion in the rear, and a church spire peeping dreamily above the house-tops; and soon the music of the cornets and the motion of the vessel ceased, and, with a sigh, we stepped ashore.

Through a crowd of car-men we made our way to the town, and, coming to the mansion of Sir Richard Keane, we passed into the grounds, and paused amid the shady walks and velvet lawns to gaze across the gleaming river valley, and to take our fill of the surrounding loveliness; and then, descending, we bade our friend good-bye, and wandered up the street until we came to a posting establishment. Here we enquired what was the distance to Mount Melleray, and ordered a car to meet us there at nine o'clock

on the following morning. The proprietor was a genial individual who said that all the honest and hardworking and prosperous portion of the population thought, with him, that Home Rule would simply ruin them ; and he added that there were many persons of this class in the district, but that both parties were on good terms, and that nothing in the nature of agrarian crime occurred We had identified him as a Unionist before we spoke to him ; and indeed it was not difficult to do this anywhere. If a man were comfortably dressed, and looked as if he never lacked a dinner ; if his face were business-like, and his expression contented, and his manners conventional, it was pretty safe to conclude that he was not a Nationalist. It is hunger that makes Home Rulers, and prosperity alone can pave the way to peace.

Walking on, we came to a little paper shop. We entered it to buy a copy of " United Ireland," and, of course, got into conversation with the man at the counter. He was a person of a very different type from the car proprietor, extremely civil, but rabidly revolutionary ; and he fairly gloated over an execrable caricature of the Premier and the Chief Secretary, and two vulgar skits upon the Marquess of Hartington and Mr. Chamberlain,

which were prominently displayed in the window. Among other items of news, he informed us that, although there were many Protestants in Cappoquin, the true test of the esteem in which a man was held was not his religion, but his politics ; and that only those of the Nationalist way of thinking, whether Protestant or Catholic, where held of any account ; that there had not been much agitation or organized resistance to the law, "because the paple had hearts like sheep," and had not the courage to emulate the people of Bodyke, and, presumably, of Ennis and of Castleisland. He said that he did not think Mr. Gladstone's scheme went half far enough ; that he was opposed to the idea of a First Order, and utterly disapproved of his offer to buy out the Irish landlords at an average of twenty years' purchase of the judicial rental, asserting that eight was ample. He also said that the majority of the peasantry desired protection, though he, as an advanced Radical, entirely disapproved of it ; that the G.O.M. was as much the friend of England as of Ireland in endeavouring to accede to the Irish demand ; and that, until this were done, he should, if a foreign army invaded the country, at once proceed to join it, and assist it to the best of his ability in overthrowing the dominion of the Saxon Oppressor ; and

he concluded by remarking that, personally, he was in favour of the creation of two new republics —the one in Ireland, the other in Great Britain— and of an offensive and defensive alliance between them.

Leaving this firebrand, we had to run the gauntlet of a host of juvenile beggars, and passed a few inferior houses; but, bearing away to the left, we soon found ourselves in a road the sides of which were overgrown with blackberries, and which overlooked a valley as deep as the Dargle and almost as beautiful—a steep, verdurous, smiling hollow so thickly cloaked with trees of every size and shape that we were not able to discern the bottom, and could only gaze upon a gigantic furrow of foliage, stretching away beyond the range of our vision, with the great blue mountains in the distance and the silver river shining in the rear.

And then we saw a circular ruin which looked like an old round tower, and, on in front of us, another tower, of curious shape and rising from a line of buildings large and stately, and could hear the sound of bells; and now we knew that we were at last approaching the Abbey.

The highway led in a circuitous direction to the right; but, descending into a little hollow,

and turning to the left, we discovered a path which took us up a steep and stony hill, and lost itself among the trees which surrounded the melancholy institution for which we were making. The path was long and rough and wearisome, and wound through fields which bore little trace of that fertility which had marked our journey hitherto. Whether they belonged to the Order we could not say; but we had heard that, when first the Abbey was established by a body of * French Cistercian monks, who had been driven from their country by the revolution of 1830, the place on which it stood, and which had been granted to them by the late Sir Richard Keane, was but a barren mountain waste, the only product of which was the heather, that still grew thickly on the portion we were traversing, and stretched along the mightier slopes beyond; that the monks had worked with marvellous energy and perseverance to reclaim it; and that their labours had transformed it into a pleasant region and crowned it with a pile of noble buildings; and hence our first impressions were disappointing.

But, as we neared our destination, the environment improved, and the immediate surroundings

* The community now consists, I understand, exclusively of Irishmen

of the Abbey sufficiently exemplified a transformation which we were the better able to appreciate after our experience of the difficulties with which it had been necessary to contend. We now discovered that the erection which adorned the building was a spire, still unfinished ; and that the scaffolding which surrounded it had given it, in the distance, the tower-like appearance which had deceived us. In spite of its greater size, however, the Abbey did not compare, for a moment, in appearance, with St. Joseph's, situated, as the latter was, in the midst of an extensive park, and with every natural advantage to enhance its charms.

But we were not left long in doubt as to the hospitality of its inmates ; for, on walking to the main entrance, we were promptly taken in charge by one of the now familiar lay brothers, and conducted round by the back of the church, and through a solemn garden, with tall yews at intervals, and saintly statues glimmering whitely between them, and a spacious lawn, and, girding all, a line of larger trees, and were led into an entrance hall, where, from the number of hats and coats and umbrellas which were lying about, it became evident that we were not, by any means, the only visitors.

Having divested ourselves of our luggage, we followed our host into a severely furnished apartment, with pictures of the ancient saints and holy fathers on the walls, and manuals of devotion upon the tables, and a general air of opulent austerity in the surroundings. We sat here for some time in silence, exchanging looks of hunger, and wondering whether the evening meal were over, and whether, if this were so, we should have to fast until the next day. But at length our conductor reappeared, and asked if we had dined ; and, upon our replying in the negative, invited us to follow him to another room, and committed to the charge of a dismal-looking brown-robed brother who wished to know if we should like a couple of eggs each. We promptly gave him to understand that we should ; and he was then informed that we had expressed a desire to attend the service known as Complin, and urged, in consequence, to satisfy our wants with all convenient speed.

In the meantime we strolled about the grounds, and listened to the sweet and solemn tolling of the bell, which signified what particular rites were in process of celebration. Presently we were informed that our meal was

ready ; and, in another long, dark room, with two rows of tables, and a solitary candle casting strange shadows upon the ceiling and into far-off corners, and the twilight deepening outside, we sat down to a repast which, though humble, was good and plentiful, and proffered in a kindly spirit by the taciturn brother who attended us, and, after a few remarks about the beauty of the surrounding country, left us to our food and to our meditations, only returning to ask if we needed anything further ; and to tell us that, when we had finished, he would show us the way to the Chapel. We made as much haste as we were able, but, just as we were about to rise and follow him, the sad, sweet, solemn tolling thrilled us once again, and he informed us that the service was over.

At eight o'clock the doors of the Abbey would be closed, and guests and monks alike were expected to retire to their chambers ; but it still wanted a quarter to that hour, and so we sauntered forth into the now deserted garden, and watched a monk at the windows of the rooms which overlooked it, carrying a lighted candle to and fro, and making ready for the guests ; whilst the lawn was growing gradually darker, and the statues glistening like ghosts amid the

yews, and a dead silence haunted everything, only broken by the sound of our footsteps, and above the great gray walls there slowly rose a full, round, harvest moon, as sad and solemn as the leaves it silvered and the statues over which it shone.

And then we went inside, and saw a troop of guests, including several priests, creeping, with lighted candles, up the great staircase ; and, as we stood perplexed, a monk, approaching us, enquired in a whisper whether we had been provided with apartments. We replied that we had not, and, with a muttered "Follow me!" he showed us two rooms which were almost opposite, and, having intimated that we might sit up until ten, was about to withdraw, with a scarcely audible "Good-night!" when I asked him if we could sit together. He hesitated, and then replied that we might if we would converse in whispers, as there was an old gentleman next door whom we should disturb in his meditations, or his slumbers, I forget which, if we spoke in anything more than an undertone.

The rooms were comfortably furnished, and here, as at R screa, we observed the usual crucifix upon the walls, and the usual books upon the tables, and, in various prominent positions,

the regulations to be observed by persons On Retreat. There was also a sheet on which the word Eternity was printed many times in large type, with some wise and touching admonitions underneath. In spite of the sanction we had received, we did not talk much, for the very atmosphere seemed oppressive, and the whole surroundings tended to keep us silent ; and, when we parted for the night, with the understanding that, whoever awoke the first, should wake the other, in order that we might be in time for mass, and to inspect the monastery before leaving, we trod on tiptoe, and dreaded lest the slightest sound would rouse the old gentleman next door, or offend the susceptibilities of the whispering confraternity ; and, as I closed the door of Mr. Richardson's bedroom and left him to his reflections, I noticed, at the end of the long, dark, lonely passage, the same strange light glimmering, and heard the same incessant ticking of a clock which had impressed us so much at Roscrea. But there was not any locked or bolted door in either room to fill our minds with vague alarm ; and the floors did not creak so much, nor were there any of the pattering noises of rats or spirits which had startled us a week ago ; and, extinguishing my flickering candle and

opening the shutters, I threw myself upon my couch, the holy moonlight falling through the window, and the clock repeating its eternal tale upon the stairs.

CHAPTER XI.

A CURIOUS BREAKFAST—WE ATTEND MASS—THE MONKS AT PRAYER—BROTHER AUGUSTINE—THE ABBEY AND ITS INMATES—A DULL DRIVER AND A CHARMING DRIVE—LISMORE CASTLE—ABSENTEEISM—THE MEN WHO SAVED THE UNION.

At six in the morning, a tap at the door announced that it was time for me to get up; but, in blissful disregard of monastic regulations, and presuming upon the liberty which we had enjoyed at Roscrea, I had retired with the intention of sleeping until seven, at least, and I was quite unconscious of the summons. Half an hour later, there was another tap, and this I heard; but, imagining that it was Mr. Richardson and, noticing the earliness of the hour, I did not, attempt to rise, but lay in that delightful state of semi-somnolence which is such a pleasing prelude to the tumult of the day, determined, whoever it might be, to lie till seven. Not many minutes had elapsed when there came yet another knock, and, at this, for some unfathomable reason, I

suddenly changed my mind, although I still imagined that I was indebted for these attentions to Mr. Richardson. I dressed and went to his room, and was surprised to find it empty ; and, on going downstairs and entering the gloomy chamber with the pictures of the saints upon the walls, I found that he was studying a monkish treatise, and that he had been up for some time, and had been out in the garden ; that one of the lay brothers had called us at six, had been to my room twice, and had made some invidious remarks in regard to my unpunctuality.

But, in spite of all this, I did not discern any signs of breakfast. We therefore went outside, and, sauntering past the yew trees and the statues, reached the kitchen garden, a very large one, carefully tilled by the monks themselves, well supplied with edibles, and plainly illustrating the energy which they had devoted to the task of reclamation. A melancholy priest was pacing to and fro amid its paths, apparently in deep meditation, with an open book in his hand ; but he looked up and courteously saluted us as we passed, and, by the time we reached the entrance hall again, there were several more priests and a number of other visitors in sight, the latter hanging about rather sheepishly, and evidently awaiting,

with more eagerness than they would have cared to acknowledge, the sound of the bell that was to invite us to breakfast.

At last it came, and some twenty mortals promptly trooped into the dining hall, everybody preternaturally quiet, and, at least as far as Mr. Richardson and myself were concerned, abnormally hungry. There was not any cold ham upon the table here; but there were plenty of fresh eggs, and huge piles of bread, and pats of butter, and an abundance of *tea and sugar and milk. Instead of saying grace, each of the guests reverently made the sign of the cross, and then assiduously directed his attention to the repast, amid a dead silence, no one venturing to speak, unless it were to ask in a whisper for an egg, or to solicit, in an undertone, and with a meaning look, the favour of another cup of tea. And we had scarcely commenced when one of the monks glided noiselessly in, and, taking a seat by the window, immediately exclaimed in a grave voice; "Consideration the Sixteenth: On the Duty of Subduing Our Passions," and began to read to us a very sensible homily upon this interesting subject. He finished first, how-

* The monks themselves are not allowed to take tea or coffee, or stimulants of any kind whatever.

ever; and, observing this, after a moment's pause, he resumed: "Consideration the Seventeenth: On the Necessity of Watchfulness." A similar and equally sensible homily followed; but, ere he reached the end of this, there was a gradual diminution in the number of eaters, and one by one the guests emptied their cups, and disposed of their eggs, and demolished their bread and butter; and, as I was half way through my last piece, I observed that Mr. Richardson and myself were the only two who were still devoting their attention to their breakfast. I therefore pushed the piece aside, in spite of the enormous appetite which the mountain air had given me, and sat back in my chair with a sort of uneasy consciousness that everybody was thinking that I ought to have done so sooner. Judge of my horror, then, when, at this moment, I saw my friend proceed to possess himself, in the most leisurely manner, of another huge round of bread, and attack it with a *sang-froid* which was clearly attributable to the fact that he had failed to notice that all the rest were waiting. I did not dare to tell him to stop; but I could see that the eyes of the company were upon him, and I can assure the reader that he had my sympathy. All at once he seemed

to realize the position, glanced at my plate, looked cautiously up the table, came to an abrupt pause, and furtively deposited the remnant of the bread upon his own. Immediately a bell rang, and everybody rose and once again made the sign of the cross, and then they all stalked grimly out.

It was now the hour at which mass was celebrated, as was indicated by the tolling of that sad, sweet bell which sounded, at intervals, both night and day, like a voice from the vanished centuries; and, at our request, a courteous lay brother conducted us through the cloisters to the chapel. Upon the walls the word "Silence" was printed in places, in large letters, as if to continually remind the community of their vow. Others were making in the same direction, including a cowled and gowned old father with pinched and withered features, and a shuffling gait, and an air of almost supernatural sanctity; and, in a few moments, we entered the sacred edifice, and found that the service had already commenced.

There was not anything particularly attractive about the building—a fine altar, with large side pillars, and, immediately above it, a somewhat tawdry window; two lesser altars to the right

and left ; some saintly images, a sweet-toned organ, and the usual lamp, which never goes out, and which is one of the most impressive features of the Catholic ritual, burning vividly before the consecrated bread and wine—these were the principal things we noticed. But the service was beautiful, if, to us, a little meaningless, and the sight of the monks who officiated at the central altar, with their stern, sad faces, and strange, thin voices, and impressive gestures, and resplendent robes, and of the venerable gray-bearded and gray-headed old man, and the pinched and pallid younger brother who assisted in the ceremonial, and the solemn intonations of the monks who thronged the choir, and the awe-struck attitude of the priests and other visitors, who bowed in reverence as the mass proceeded, and the smoke of the incense as the gray-beard swung the silver censer to and fro, until the scent of it had penetrated to the farthest corner of the place, and the yearning voice of the organ, and the kindling of the altar-lights, and the intermittent tolling of the bell—all these combined to form a spectacle which I shall never forget.

At last the solemn rites were over, and a red-bearded brother named Augustine appeared, and offered to conduct us over the monastery.

Accompanied by two gentlemen and a bright-faced boy, we followed him through the corridors to the library and museum, a large room with a great number of volumes, chiefly theological, in the cases that were ranged along the walls. Some of these books were not of the most orthodox character; and, among them, I was surprised to find Strauss's "Life of Jesus" and several of the works of John Stuart Mill. But the monks were not allowed to use the volumes indiscriminately: they had to inform the abbot of the one they wanted, and to procure it through him. Here, as at Roscrea, they never saw a newspaper, and were in almost absolute ignorance of the doings of the great, jostling world outside, as a proof of which I may say that when I asked Brother Augustine what the monks generally thought of Home Rule, all the answer he vouchsafed to me was that not one in twenty knew anything about it.

There was a large glass case of religious relics and miscellaneous curiosities in the room, and some of these were very interesting. I was especially struck with an old Irish crownless harp, upon the label attached to which some loving hand had written those beautiful verses of Moore:

"Dear Harp of my country! in darkness I found thee,
The cold chain of silence had hung o'er thee long,
When proudly, my own Island Harp! I unbound thee,
And gave all thy chords to light, freedom, and song!
The warm lay of love and the light note of gladness
Have waken'd thy fondest, thy liveliest thrill;
But so oft hast thou echo'd the deep sigh of sadness,
That even in thy mirth it will steal from thee still.

"Dear Harp of my country! farewell to thy numbers,
This sweet wreath of song is the last we shall twine;
Go, sleep with the sunshine of fame on thy slumbers,
Till touch'd by some hand less unworthy than mine.
If the pulse of the patriot, soldier, or lover,
Has throbb'd at our lay, 'tis thy glory alone;
I was *but* as the wind passing heedlessly over,
And all the wild sweetness I waked was thy own."

Brother Augustine led us, next, to the room in which the monks assembled to receive instruction in the faith; and here he pointed out a very large and handsome crook, which one of them had carved in bog-oak. Having visited the dormitory, which was larger than the corresponding room at Roscrea, but constructed on the same principle we descended to the refectory, which, said Brother Augustine, with an attempt at a joke, "is one of the happiest corners in our monastery." Here again we were forcibly reminded of St. Joseph's, and, in their general arrangement, the two abbeys had much in common.

Our guide, however, did not offer to show us the interior of any of the cells the brethren occupied: he simply indicated their locality, and then conducted us to the bakehouse. In this a couple of monks were busily manipulating a huge trough of dough, and an oven was gleaming redly, in preparation for the loaves which lay waiting in the next apartment. In another room great flat pans of cream were ready for the churn. Further still, we were shown into a carpenter's shop, in which two monks were hard at work with plane and saw; and then we were admitted to a blacksmith's forge, where a rough old lay brother, with spindle shanks and long white stockings, his brown robe only reaching to his knees, was blowing the bellows; and, in yet another room, a monkish artificer was working in brass, at which craft, said our companion, he was exceptionally skilful. In the dormitory, the refectory, the milk-house, and the rooms occupied by the carpenter, the blacksmith and the coppersmith alike, there were pictures of Christ, or of Mary, or the Apostles, or the Saints: wherever the community went; whatever might be their duties; were they melancholy fathers who devoted all their time to worship and to meditation, or lay brothers merely, exempted by their daily labours

from the ceaseless service of the rest, they were always face to face with mute reminders of their sacred office, and the awful mysteries attaching to their vow. Shut out from the world, there were a thousand little devices to turn their thoughts towards heaven.

We next inspected the farm-yard, and noticed a number of cattle and sheep, these being reared, said Brother Augustine, in explanation, for the use of the numerous visitors to the monastery; of the schools the monks maintained, in which no less than four hundred children received instruction; and of the poor, who knew that, here, at least, their hunger would be satisfied, and Christ's disciples carry out his creed. All the members of the brotherhood assisted in the cultivation of the garden and the farm, and the services of the various handicraftsmen we had seen at work were in constant request in order to supply the various and numerous requirements of this immense establishment; and, indeed, outside help was necessary. We saw two or three Irishmen, in ordinary garb, upon the premises; and these, we found, were engaged in rendering it.

The monks were frequently making alterations, extensions and improvements in the arrangements of the monastery; and there was abundant scope

for their genius in endeavouring to adequately fit it for its holy purpose, and to fertilize as far as possible the barren height upon whose purple slopes it stood. Since our visit to Roscrea, one of the fathers had, it appeared, been chosen by the monks of St. Joseph as their abbot. He was a man who was greatly beloved for his devotedness, and we were told that they might think themselves fortunate in securing him, especially as they were in the thick of extensive building projects, and he himself was an architect of no mean order. Though the monks had accomplished miracles since first they came to Mount Melleray, they would never succeed, said Brother Augustine, in making their property really productive, for the soil was wretchedly poor ; and, pleasant as the situation seemed to us upon this fine September day, the place was bleak and desolate when winter came, and the mists were on the mountains or the storms abroad.

We glanced inside that portion of the church which was reserved for the public. Here several persons were devoutly kneeling, and we heard that, on Sundays, from as early as four o'clock in the morning, the place was often packed with peasants, who crowded from the hills and valleys far and near to worship with the strange

community whose piety and sacrifice had won their reverence as their charity had won their love.

Our last visit was to the burial ground—a little grassy corner with several long lines of plain, short, black, wooden crosses, each bearing the name of the father or brother who reposed beneath it. The monks are interred without coffins, and the number of the departed was already large. There was only one stone tomb. This was quite massive in appearance, and had been erected to the memory of the founder of the Abbey: all the rest, abbots, and fathers, and brothers alike, reposed beneath the selfsame small black cross, meet emblem of that equality which the high and the low, and the rich and the poor, and the proud and the humble, shall alike experience when they pass into the domain of "the great leveller, Death."

"Here we shall all await the last summons," said Brother Augustine gravely, as we stood by his side upon the dewy sward.

We did not speak, for our hearts were moved within us, and, with reverent feet, we slowly turned away.

Our car had long been waiting when, after signing our names in the Visitor's Book, thanking

our conductor for the hospitality which we had experienced at the hands of the Order, and leaving them a little token of our goodwill, we passed from the monastery into a yard at the side of it ; and, mounting without delay, we told the driver to start at once. Riding along a fine avenue, we came to the schools, another large and well-constructed block of buildings ; but these were at present empty, for the scholars were all away for the vacation ; and, continuing our journey, we had, in a few moments, left Mount Melleray, with its monkish occupants and curious customs, behind, and were dashing down a good, sloping road on the way to Lismore.

Our driver was a singularly uninteresting individual ; and, as he seemed to imagine that it was impossible to converse without allowing the horse to walk, whilst we were particularly anxious to make up for lost time, my usual catechism was curtailed ; and I contented myself with ascertaining that the district was quiet and contented, though the majority of the inhabitants were Home Rulers ; that, in his opinion, the Proclamation of the League was not necessary, but that the people did not appear to be very much concerned about it ; that, although he was, him-

self, a Home Ruler, he was not a member ; and that the membership was gradually falling off.

But, if the driver was dull, the drive was delightful ; and, as we once more skirted the wooded valley, with the purple hills beyond it, and once again passed down the long white street of Cappoquin, and once again caught glimpses of the stream along whose winding reaches we had sailed upon the previous afternoon ; and, as we followed it towards the west, along a leafy road, the water glimmering between the branches and on the landscape everywhere the sunshine's gentle touch, a sense of peace came over me which the silence only seemed to heighten, and, in the spell of it, I gave my fancy rein. I recalled the multitude of lovely scenes on which our eyes had feasted since we first set foot on Erin's shores ; I remembered the sadness which has been the almost invariable heritage of her sons and daughters ; I wondered how it was that man should have desecrated the hills and dales and pasturelands which the heavens had made so beautiful ; and, wondering, the vision changed, and, ere I knew it, I was dreaming such sweet dreams of peace and happiness, and of the union of hearts as well as of parliaments, and of man and Nature reconciled as filled my eyes with tears.

Suddenly we turned to the left, and crossed a magnificent stone bridge, and were face to face with the Castle of Lismore. It rises from the very verge of a stupendous wall of rock, immediately to the right of the bridge. The rock is absolutely perpendicular, but screened by trees that look as if they grew in air; and, crowning it, are great gray battlements and lofty towers, amid a framework of the richest foliage; whilst, far below, the gloomy river glides beneath the bridge, and so steals on through one long wonderland until it

"slips
Into the shining sea."

The grandeur of the site of this proud habitation I have never seen surpassed. Across the way the tapering spire of the Protestant church points upwards from the trees, and a well-made road conducts the traveller to the town.

We dismounted at the Castle, which belongs to the Duke of Devonshire; and were directed across a fine court-yard to the entrance hall by one of the servants.

"Everybody round about seems to say that the Duke is a very good landlord," said I, addressing this individual.

"I should think they've need to!" he answered curtly.

A faithful-looking old servitor accompanied us over the mansion. The ball-room is supposed to resemble the great hall at Hampton Court; and the principal apartments look out across the river, and up and down the valley through whose leafy depths it flows, commanding views the grace of which it would be hard to parallel. In the eastern tower King James the Second sojourned at the time of the Revolution; and it is said that when he was taken to one of the chambers built above the Blackwater, he was so terrified, on observing its tremendous height, that he accused his host of a design to hurl him headlong through the window. In the tower at the rear, the first British Parliament ever held in Ireland assembled, under the presidency of King John. At the western river angle rises the huge Carlisle Tower, which was commenced by the late Duke of Devonshire, and was a part of very extensive alterations once in contemplation.

It was sad to notice the covered furniture and the air of solitude which hung over the stately old mansion, and to reflect upon the cause; for, we were told that the Duke had never been to Lismore since the tragedy in Phœnix Park, though doubtless his extreme age has had something to do with the fact of his protracted

absence. It is, however, singular that the Marquess of Hartington should so seldom pay the place a visit, for a more charming residence it would be impossible to conceive. How much Ireland suffers from the absence of her landlords is patent to the most casual observer; and, if all who own estates in that country would make a point of spending a few weeks, at least, every year in the localities from whence they draw their incomes, the population would be materially benefited, and they themselves would reap a rich reward in the goodwill of a race who were always grateful to their benefactors until, in an evil hour, they became a prey to the reckless demagogues who are gradually effacing from the Irish character some of its best and brightest traits.

But it is not fair to blame the landlords too severely. At the door of the people themselves a share of the responsibility must lie. By their unreasonable demands, by their chronic disquietude, by their openly expressed hatred of the men whom they denounce for never coming among them, by their midnight terrorism and their mid-day murders, they have driven away some who were naturally just and generous, and who earnestly desired to do whatever in them lay for the advantage of the localities in which their lot was

cast. Can we marvel that a landlord should resort to England for the hunting which is prohibited upon his own estates in Ireland? Can we be surprised that he should prefer the safety and the pleasure of London society to the danger and the solitude of his home in regions where excited orators have declared that landlords should be shot "like partridges"? There are too many Irish landlords who have little or no regard for the welfare of their tenantry, and who, if the country were perfectly peaceful and contented, would, in all probability, still be absentees; and, for the men of this character, no censure can be too strong. There are others who have only abandoned Ireland because of the follies and the crimes of a section of the Irish people, and because, in the districts they desire to assist, they are deprived of their most elementary privileges, and insulted at every turn; and it is not right to judge the latter class too harshly.

From the princely dwelling rooms of the deserted mansion we ascended to the top of the turret which crowns its loftiest tower; and, though the rain was falling and the sky was dim with gathering clouds, beheld the peerless vale extending to the right and left for miles.

The Castle stands upon the site of one of the

four ancient Irish universities, which is said to have been of European fame, and, in its palmy days, to have educated as many as four thousand students,including Alfred,the wisest and the greatest of our early English kings. It was founded in 1185, by the Earl of Mortaigne, afterwards King John ; was overthrown by the natives, and, on its restoration, served, for a time, as the episcopal seat of the diocese. In 1589, it was conferred by Bishop Magrath upon Sir Walter Raleigh. Twice besieged in the course of the civil war in Charles's time, and burnt in 1645, it was again rebuilt, and became the residence of the Boyle family, the famous Earls of Cork. From them it passed, by the marriage of a daughter, to the Cavendishes, its present owners.

The city, to which we now proceeded, has suffered repeatedly from Scandinavian and other marauders, and is supposed to be the oldest in Ireland, having been founded early in the seventh century. From this period the original cathedral, which was destroyed by fire 500 years later, is understood to date. It was erected by St. Carthagh, and the Book of Lismore and the crozier of the bishops are still preserved. The spire of the existing structure contrasts very finely

with the great tower of the Castle on the other side the road. There is also a large Roman Catholic chapel here, and the houses have a cheerful and substantial appearance which sufficiently evidences the liberality and public spirit of the landlord.

It is to the heir to Lismore that we owe the preservation of the Union. When, discarding every ancient prejudice, and setting the safety of the realm above all else, the Marquess of Hartington stood side by side with the Marquess of Salisbury in Her Majesty's Opera House, and announced his intention to co-operate with the Conservative party in resisting Mr. Gladstone's Bill, the air was cleared. A new banner was unfolded, and beneath it there swiftly gathered all that was best, and nearly all that was decent, in Liberalism. Had they lacked a leader who was strong and honest and determined, and ready, in the nation's cause, to sacrifice a thousand ties, it is possible that some of the weaker-kneed dissentients from the new departure would have turned faint-hearted—"and whispering" they would "ne'er consent"—consented" to a policy which they had spent the best part of their lives in denouncing, and which the accumulated testimony of generations declared

to be dangerous and dishonourable to a degree. But the attitude of the recognized heir to a dukedom and to the chief place in the councils of the Liberal party left them no excuse for hesitation. Here was one prepared to step into the breach who, all his life, had been identified with Liberalism; who had led its forces when the ancient captain, like Achilles, "sulked within his tent," and borne the brunt of opposition when the fortunes of the party were at their lowest; one who was always to the fore whenever the cause of progress asked a champion, or the bounds of freedom needed broadening; one who had no possible motive to induce him to relinquish his allegiance, except the desire to do his duty; whose whole past was associated with the party of progress, and whose political future was wrapped up in its triumph. A man connected all his life with everything that was best in the history of the nation; trained in statecraft from the cradle; with a deep stake in the prosperity of Ireland, and an abiding desire to serve her; whose brother had died a martyr to the Irish cause, slain by the assassin on the evening of the day he came to usher in a new *régime;* whose father had spent untold thousands for the good of the Irish peasantry, and was known in every

corner of the kingdom as a public benefactor with a name above reproach ; and whose whole family history was a record of consistent and disinterested public service.

Nor was this all. By the side of Lord Hartington there stood "the people's tribune," the greatest living champion of liberty, the grandest orator of his generation—a politician who, from first to last, had never swerved from principle for a moment ; whose sincerity was beyond question ; whose sturdy common sense above dispute ; and who, in his own indignant words, had fought for Ireland when her present leaders were in "their swaddling-clothes." With John Bright, the representative of the older Radicalism, was Joseph Chamberlain, the young and brilliant leader of the new—perhaps the most popular man in the party, and universally regarded as the future Prime Minister of England. In hearty sympathy with both was Mr. Goschen, the champion of the moderate Liberals, and perhaps the cleverest financier of the age ; Sir Henry James, whose independence cost him a seat on the Woolsack, and £10,000 a year ; Earl Selborne, the past Lord Chancellor ; the Earl of Derby, a peer remarkable alike for honesty, clear-headedness and public spirit ; the

Earl of Northbrook, one of the most experienced and trusted of our administrators ; and the Duke of Argyll, the foremost member of the Scottish aristocracy in intellect as well as in name. These were only a few of the leading Liberal statesmen who were agreed in the resolve to resist the ill-omened proposals of the Premier to the last. The whole Conservative party were banded together in a solid phalanx to assist them ; five-sixths of the House of Lords were with them ; and nearly a hundred Liberal Members of Parliament swelled their ranks.

This, in itself a spectacle sufficiently astounding, was only half the tale. The indignation at the great surrender penetrated into every section of society. Tennyson and Swinburne, our greatest living poets, the one a life-long Liberal and friend of Mr. Gladstone—the other a Republican and the author of some of the grandest songs of freedom ever sung ; John Ruskin, our greatest prose writer, and the mightiest moral teacher of our time ; and Lecky and Froude, our chief authorities on Irish history, the first an Irishman, and each pre-eminent in wider fields, were all united in their opposition to the plan. Tyndall and Huxley and Spencer, our greatest living scientists, emerging from their laboratories,

lifted up their voices against this treason to the Empire. Sir Frederick Leighton, the President of the Royal Academy, declares himself "a Unionist of the most uncompromising type." The Earl of Dufferin and Viscount Wolseley —both Irishmen—the one the prince of our diplomatists—the other our greatest living soldier, were in the same camp. And even in the quiet of the churches was the storm of anger felt; for Spurgeon, our most popular preacher—a Baptist and a Radical—declared that "the whole scheme" was "as full of dangers and absurdities as if it came from a madman," and Dallinger, the ablest man in Methodism, and Dale, the greatest Congregational pastor of the day, were scarcely less pronounced in their hostility.

And these were merely the brightest stars in their respective constellations. Nearly all our "men of light and leading" were of the same opinion. The Royal Society was staunchly Unionist in its sympathies; in all the Universities, English, Scotch, and Irish alike, the Unionists were in a vast majority; and the same applied to all our other learned bodies.

It is, in short, indubitable that the intellect of England is practically unanimous in its protest,

and to attempt to minimise the significance of the fact is folly. Money may not count for anything, but brains should surely weigh. And great as Mr. Gladstone's genius is, I have yet to learn that it is greater than that of all the greatest men in the Empire put together. He may be guiding us to paths of honour and of safety, as some aver; but past experience does not warrant this implicit faith. He supported the war in the Crimea, and he was wrong. He espoused the cause of disunion in America, and he was wrong. He was wrong about Cyprus, and wrong about the Suez Canal shares, and wrong in what he said of Russia and of Austria. He despatched an army to crush the Boers, and he was wrong. And, after we had been thrice defeated, he withdrew them, and he was wrong. He bombarded Alexandria and exiled Arabi, and he was wrong. He sent the gallant Gordon to his death, and mowed the children of the desert down in multitudes, and wasted millions on a war which everyone to-day regards as a mistake. He gave us to understand that the Irish Church Act, and each of his Irish Land Acts, and the Arrears Act, and his two Coercion Acts would settle the Irish difficulty, and, in every instance, he was wrong. He

introduced a Land Purchase scheme the principles of which were so manifestly wrong that not a single voice was lifted in defence of it. He declared that the retention of the Irish Members in the Imperial Parliament was impossible, and he now admits that he was wrong. For twenty years at least his leading prophecies have been falsified, and his opinions have periodically changed, and, in all his later policy, he has been hopelessly in the wrong. Is he right now?

CHAPTER XII.

BACK TO THE REBEL CITY—FERMOY—THE HOME OF SPENSER—AN AMERICAN PRIEST UPON THE CONTROVERSY — MALLOW—"THE GROVES OF BLARNEY" — "THOSE SHANDON BELLS" — ABOARD THE "ST. FINBAR"—UNDER THE RAINBOW—"THE SILVERY LEE"—QUEENSTOWN—THE LIGHTS UPON THE LAND—"ISLE OF BEAUTY, FARE THEE WELL!"

From a pleasant station we proceeded by rail to Fermoy, still following the Blackwater, and passing through scenery which, if scarcely equal to the scenery below Lismore, was still, in places, very lovely. Fermoy is well-built and agreeably situated. It boasts a Catholic cathedral, an Episcopalian church, and several chapels, also a court house, a college, and extensive barracks for both infantry and cavalry. The river is crossed by a fine stone bridge, and there are some good houses in the vicinity. The town was a mere collection of huts until, in 1796, it was purchased by the late J. Anderson, Esq., and to him its development is mainly due.

Beyond Fermoy, we passed a ruin on our left in which we were told, with how much truth I cannot say, that Spenser had resided after the fire which destroyed the Castle of Kilcolman—indeed, we were informed by one gentleman that this was Kilcolman itself; and, whilst we had our doubts upon the subject, we were working ourselves into a becoming state of enthusiasm when a plainly dressed, ordinary-looking sort of man entered the carriage, and said that Kilcolman lay near Buttevant, and that we could not see it from the line; but that a river which he indicated was "the gentle Mulla" whose waves the poet tells us that he "taught to weep"; that on its banks, the famous Castle stood; and that the hills to our right were linked with memories of "The Faerie Queene." He could quote the work with some felicity, but had not read it, and remarked that he doubted whether anybody had. He seemed much suprised when I told him that I had myself accomplished the feat; and that, lengthy as the poem was, I had found the spell of it so strong and the music so haunting that I was inclined to wish that all the books had been completed. But he knew a great deal more about Spenser than I had given him credit for, and he said that it was chiefly

through his own instrumentality that steps had been taken to preserve the Castle from ruin. He added that the poet's memory was unpopular on account of the sentiments to which he had given expression in his "View of the Present State of Ireland." Alas, in Spenser's time, as in our own, we were confronted by the immemorial difficulty; and our statesmen had to face a problem which all the intervening generations have not served to solve! Let us emulate the spirit which he showed in dealing with it, and "thinke nothing soe hard but that, through wysedome, it may be mastred and subdued"!

I also had a long talk with an American priest, whose nationality was sufficiently indicated by his pronunciation — a broad-minded, gentlemanly fellow who gave me many interesting particulars concerning the American way of looking at the Irish question, and declared that, so far as he was able to judge, the intelligent opinion of his countrymen, altogether apart from that of the politicians and the panderers to the Irish vote, was in favour of Home Rule for Ireland, coupled with adequate provisions for maintaining the integrity of the Empire. He seemed, at first, disposed to think it desirable to exclude the Irish members from the Imperial

Parliament, though emphatically disclaiming any Separatist tendencies; but, when I told him that the maintenance of the Irish representation was precisely the point upon which the Unionists, and, indeed, many professed Gladstonians, insisted as an essential basis for any scheme of local self-government; that they regarded their presence at Westminster as the outward and visible sign of the imperial unity, and as a guarantee that the cry for Home Rule was not dictated by any ulterior motive; and when I instanced the United States as a country where the problem of combining perfect local self-government with perfect homogeneity as regards the rest of the world had been solved, he recognized the reasonableness of the proposal, and, in fact, admitted the principle to be correct and expedient; and he said that, if any American State were to rebel, the rest of the States would undoubtedly coerce it into obedience; that he was convinced of the justice of such a course; and that the United Kingdom, under similar circumstances, would have both the legal and the moral right to do the same. I enjoyed our conversation greatly; but I was considerably amused when, after listening to my own views upon the subject, which I set forth at some length,

he suddenly exclaimed, with much gravity: "Excuse me, sir; may I ask if you are a Member of Parliament?"

He left us at Mallow, a fine town on the north bank of the Blackwater, with the ruins of a castle which had been one of the strongholds of the Desmonds, and a warm spring resembling that at Clifton. Here we changed, and, crossing the river—which still flows from the westward, rising in the hills some dozen miles away, upon the verge of County Cork—by a bridge of ten arches, turned southwards on our way back to the Rebel City.

From Mallow to Blarney there was not anything particularly noteworthy. Our fellow-passengers were uninteresting and the scenery the same; but the land was still fertile, and the whole of the south of Ireland wore an air of comparative comfort and plenty which I could not fail to contrast with the bleakness and the poverty of the Wilds of the West.

Mr. Richardson had a commission to execute in Cork, and consequently could not stop at Blarney; but I, having half an hour to spare, had time to ramble to a point from whence I could obtain a good view of the famous square tower within the walls of which there is a stone

"that whoever kisses,
Oh! he never misses to grow eloquent;
'Tis he may clamber to a lady's chamber,
Or become a Member of Parliament;"

and of

"The groves of Blarney"

which

"are so charming,
All by the purling of sweet silent streams."

Hurrying breathlessly back to the station, I found, as usual, that, as yet, there were not any signs of the train; but, on this occasion, it was only about ten minutes late, and, in due course, I dismounted at the Cork terminus. Here I met Mr. Franklin again, and, as I had a little time to spare before the steamer started, we strolled together through the principal thoroughfares, which were now alive with traffic and a busy multitude, and ascended St. Patrick's Hill, from whence we had a splendid view of the park, and the city, and the river, and the gentle hills surrounding them.

Immediately below us was the antiquated, clumsy, lighthouse-like steeple of Shandon Church, three sides of which are built of white stone and one of red, a circumstance which prompted the lines:

"Party-coloured, like the people,
Red and white stands Shandon steeple"—

lines that were never more appropriate than now. But, however strange the architecture of this ancient church may be, its bells have gained a world-wide fame, and have been celebrated in verses at which purists may cavil, but which go straight to the heart, and have a quaint melody of their own that is well fitted to commemorate the melody of which they tell—I mean those tender verses by Father Prout :

"With deep affection
And recollection
I often think of
Those Shandon bells,
Whose sounds so wild would,
In the days of childhood,
Fling round my cradle
Their magic spells.
* * * *
"I've heard bells chiming
Full many a clime in,
Tolling sublime in
Cathedral shrine,
While at a glib rate
Brass tongues would vibrate ;
But all their music
Spoke nought like thine."
* * * *

The rain, which had been falling since my

arrival in the city, began to diminish as we went aboard the "St. Finbar" and bade Mr. Franklin good-bye; and, as the rattling of the crane and the thumping of the merchandise, which was being stowed away in the hold, already laden with cattle, abated, and all except the crew and passengers hastened ashore, and the hoarse whistle echoed across the river, and the hawsers were cast off, and the vessel slowly glided from her moorings, it altogether ceased; and, beneath an arch of rainbow of great brilliancy, which stretched from bank to bank unbroken—as beautiful as the rainbow on the Shannon, and more abiding—we left the quay, and, passing the point where the two arms of the river unite, floated calmly into the main channel. Upon the right the race-course lay, and, on the left, a long, green hill from which a hundred pleasant houses overlooked the Lee; and, in the rear, we saw the masts and spars of ships and steamers, the clustering roofs of wharves and warehouses, the lessening shapes of shops and mansions and great public buildings, and a maze of chimneys, towers and spires, the three towers of the Cathedral and the clumsy tower of Shandon Church conspicuous above them all, and proudly visible when all the rest had disappeared.

Soon we noticed a low ruin on the very verge of the river, and were told that this was Dungannion Castle, the place where William Penn embarked for America. Beyond it, on the Blackrock promontory, a fine modern castle stood out boldly from the water, upon the site of a monastery of the time of James the Second. And then the river widened into Lough Mahon, and, leaving Foaty Island on the left, we saw

> "The town of Passage
> . both large and spacious,
> And situated upon the *say*;"

and glided down the channel which divides Great Island from the western border of the estuary, and sailed out into the Harbour, catching, on the way, a glimpse of Monkstown, with its narrow wooded glen, up which the houses ran amid the trees and lost themselves. One of the sailors, a fine, stalwart, healthy fellow, told me that he had fixed upon Monkstown as his permanent haven when his life upon the sea was over. He could scarcely have chosen a fairer spot, with the green waves in front of it, and the green trees behind, and the quiet glen, and the ruined castle, and the white and peaceful mansions, and the endless

panorama of the ships which came and went to "do business in great waters." It is said that the castle was built in 1636, by Anastatia Goold, during the absence of her husband in Spain; and that, in order to be able to provide sufficient funds, she bought the food and clothing which the workmen required, and supplied them at her own price.

Presently we came to Queenstown. It is situated in Great Island, on the slope of a steep hill, its white houses and churches rising in tiers from the busy quay, where many steamers lay in picturesque succession. Upon the summit of the hill we saw the huge establishment of the Admiral, and the long, old, dingy yellow Military Hospital, peeping over pretty little ivy-covered precipices; whilst, rising from the centre of the town was the Cathedral, with a hundred intricacies in the carving of its windows and the decoration of its walls; but still, alas! unfinished, like so many other Irish churches, a bare strip of tower alone projecting from the roof to waken visions of magnificence unrealized, and preach the sermon so much needed in the sister isle—that no individual, or family, or institution, secular or sacred, ought to enter into an undertaking without counting the cost.

The original name of Queenstown was Cove of Cork, and it was not until the strife with France at the close of the last century that it became a place of importance. Its present appellation only dates from the visit of Her Majesty in 1849. The climate is said to be more salubrious than that of any part of England or France, and even to equal that of Naples. In an old grave-yard in the neighbourhood surrounding the ruins of Clonmell Church, the ashes of Charles Wolfe repose.

On the other side of us were the handsome naval warehouses of Hawlbowline, which were used as stores for the purpose of victualling the fleet, and supplying it with the munitions of war which might, at any moment, be necessary to strike terror into the hearts of the foes of the Empire. Beyond Hawlbowline lay Rocky Island, where there is a large powder magazine ; and, further still, was the grassy Spike Island, formerly used as a convict station, and crowned by the walls of Fort Westmorland, from whence great grinning guns projected to guard the Harbour—a noble sheet of water five miles in length by two in breadth, in which the whole of the British navy might easily find shelter.

From Queenstown Harbour Raleigh sailed, in 1617, upon the voyage from which he was never to return; and from it also sailed the "Sirius," the second steamer that ever crossed the Atlantic, contriving to perform in seventeen days a feat which now takes less than seven. In how short a time the passage will ultimately be accomplished it would be hazardous to conjecture. The whole locality abounds in stirring memories. It was to the narrow creek of Crosshaven, which was now pointed out to us to the right, that Sir Francis Drake, perhaps the boldest man who ever braved 'the battle and the breeze," retreated from the Spanish fleet; and here his pigmy cruiser lay concealed for days, whilst the enemy were vainly searching for him in and about the river. The place is still known as Drake's Pool, and the possibility of his hiding there affords a striking illustration of the difference between the tiny wooden war-ships of the age of Elizabeth and the leviathans of the age of Victoria, five of which, by the way—the Channel Fleet—were lying in the Mersey on our arrival at Liverpool.

But our strength does not depend so much upon the size of our ships as upon the men who man them; and

"The spirit of our fathers
Shall start from every wave,"

and a nation of Drakes be ready to die for their sovereign should the hour of danger come Ay, and foremost among them will be the sons of Ireland ; for, in spite of the deluge of slander and treason and hate and envy with which a few demagogues of the baser sort have striven to drown the Irishman's love of the Empire and the Irishman's loyalty to his Queen, his heart is too warm and his spirit is too dauntless, and his soul is too generous to fail us in the time of need !

At anchor close at hand was a vessel of an intermediate period—the "Revenge"—one of the grand old war-ships of

"The greatest sailor since our world began."

My attention was likewise directed to an American liner, which had been compelled, through some mishap, to put back into port ; and from the sailors we learnt that, a fortnight before, the "St. Finbar" had played a part in connection with a recent catastrophe, for she had conveyed the passengers who had been rescued from the burning cabins of the "City of Montreal" to

Liverpool, a place which, in that awful hour when the red flames were curling round the decks, they had never hoped to see again.

And now we took a last look at the Harbour, and at the ships and boats which thronged it, and passed the Coastguard Station, and sailed between the formidable Carlisle and Camden forts, and watched the flag that floated from the Signal Station, and observed a pretty church upon the hills, and rounding Roche's Point, with its white lighthouse, passed out into the open sea. The rich, pale green of the estuary had deepened into emerald, and we felt the swell and rolled uneasily by this. But overhead the sky was sunny and the breezes light, and merrily we sailed along the shore, and by the Ballycottin Lighthouse, on its tiny isle ; and, though the scene grew gradually dim, could vaguely trace the inlet on the verge of which there stood the town of Youghal. And now the golden day-god disappeared, and, as the splendour paled, the sky grew green above his ocean resting-place, but still was blue, with clouds of fleece and flame, directly overhead; and, where the coast turned inwards towards Dungarvan Bay, a strange red haze was hanging like a curtain, lifted just enough to give to us a vision of low shores and fields in shadowland.

Beyond, there glimmered, in the east, the light on Hook Head, at the entrance to Waterford Harbour, and, like a streak of blood, the moon arose, and glared in anger from a couch of gloomy cloud, but, mounting higher, ceased to frown, and floated up amid the azure, round and full and beautiful, and flooded all the surface of the sea with silver beams. Far off, two ruby beacons burned, and, as the moments slipped away, grew ever nearer till we passed between them, the dusky shores of Wexford lying hazily upon our lee. Then, rounding Carnsore Point, we saw the lights of Wexford Harbour, and a score of twinkling points of fire towards the north, and, hoisting sail, put forth into St. George's Channel. And then the wind blew colder and the midnight came, and, out in front, the fatherland lay waiting as we left the isle of beauty sleeping in the white arms of the sea.

VALEDICTORY.

IN PRAISE OF PADDY—IN PRAISE OF MR. RICHARDSON—A WORD TO THE TOURIST—A DIVIDED COUNTRY—THE SITUATION SUMMARIZED—MY CLOSING DREAM.

And now one task alone remains before we say farewell. It is to examine the evidence that Mr. Richardson and I had gathered in our various wanderings, and to indicate the conclusions to which it seemed to lead.

First, a final word in praise of the country. I have travelled pretty extensively, and have been privileged to visit many charming places ; and in my opinion, the scenery of Ireland will vie with that of the best of them. The magnificence of Clew Bay, the manifold attractions of the Antrim Coast, the dreamy loveliness of Killarney, and, above all, the unimaginable grace and grandeur of Glengariffe, are not be to be beaten in any portion of Great Britain, and I question if in Europe there are scenes more fair. And, when

the scenery is least pretentious, the life of the people is so novel, and the very air so laden with legend and so rich with romantic associations, that it must possess an abiding interest alike to the student of human character, and to the lover of the shadowy tales of eld. But, in a thousand unfrequented corners, Irish life and Irish legend are linked with all that is most beautiful in Nature ; and the lore of a land whose history dates back to the Deluge may be recalled in the midst of landscapes that are positively fairy-like ; whilst the abounding humour of a race as quaintly picturesque as any in the world is effervescing everywhere, and soon becomes contagious. Of the hospitality of Irishmen I have already spoken, and I need not dwell upon the grace and piquancy of Irish women. So palpable was this that Mr. Richardson and I were guilty, on more than one occasion, of incipient gallantries which most would envy, and which none but Benedicks, I think, would venture to condemn. For our views were broad enough. If we were ready, at one moment, to discuss politics with a patriot, we were ready, the next moment, to have a chat with a colleen. If we were interested, one day, in the theological systems of a monastic order, we were prepared, another day, to improvise a dance in a Cork boarding

house. There are some who have not any eye for fine scenery There are others who have not any eye for fair faces. Mr. Richardson had an eye for both. And, coupled with this, he had a profound interest in the social and political condition of the country. His energies were as inexhaustible as his tastes were catholic, and, as our inclinations harmonized, we saw and heard a hundred things which escape the observation of the ordinary tourist, and accomplished more in a month than either of us had believed to be possible. A better comrade no one ever had.

In such a country, and under such conditions, our three journeys were naturally enjoyable in the extreme. Indeed, I have never enjoyed my holidays so much before or since, and one of the principal aims I have had in writing these volumes has been to induce some of my readers to follow in our footsteps. They will be helping Ireland by spending money in it —its greatest need—and they will be helping England by endeavouring to comprehend one of the greatest problems England has to face. John Bull has failed to govern his Other Island successfully because he has failed to understand her. And he has failed to understand her because he has been content to take his information second-

hand. The way to comprehend the Celtic riddle is to cross the Channel.

But here I must interpose a word of warning. The visitor must dispossess himself, at the outset, as far as possible, of prejudice. He must determine to hear both sides. Above all, he must accept the statements to which he listens *cum grano salis.* If he prematurely betray his own opinions, the opinions of his carmen, boatmen, and guides will, in all probability, be conveniently modified to suit his own; and, wherever a tip is expected, he may usually take it for granted that his information comes from a tainted source. If he copy the example of the majority of the politicians who have visited the sister isle, and resign himself to the guidance of the leaders of the League, he is pretty sure to come home a Home Ruler ; but he must not imagine that he understands the Irish people, and has listened to "a plain, unvarnished tale." If he accept the chaperonage of an Orangeman, or look to the landlords and their satellites alone for his information, he is pretty sure to return an ardent Unionist ; but he must not imagine that there is not any more to be said.

Beyond all doubt, the safest plan to adopt is the plan that was adopted by Mr. Richardson and

myself. That plan was, as the reader will remember, to mingle freely with every class of the population with whom we were brought into contact, and to endeavour, by the exercise of a little tact, to ascertain their genuine personal opinions on the controversy. We were not content with merely learning that the tenants were groaning under an alien tyranny. We asked for details. We were not prepared to be satisfied with the bald statement that the land laws were unjust. We wanted to know how and why. It was not enough for us to hear that some particular peasant desired Home Rule. We asked the reason. We wished him to tell us in what way he expected to benefit by it, and contrived to fathom his aspirations, and to grasp the motive at the root of his Nationalism. And, if a rabid Orangeman informed us that a civil war would inevitably follow a separate Parliament, we remembered that a moderate Presbyterian disclaimed this view, and that a sober Catholic laughed it to scorn. The answers we received were so conflicting that, often enough, in desperation, we were inclined to give the problem up, and, like the old gentleman in whose interest we were making our enquiries, to pronounce the whole country quite incom-

prehensible. But we persevered ; we endeavoured to eliminate the true from the false ; to put two and two together ; to compare and analyze and discriminate; and, whilst we found much that was sound in the representations of either party, and much that was doubtful, the question grew simpler as we grappled with it, and clearer with every step we took. And some points were established beyond all possibility of dispute.

In the first place, I must repeat that, whilst the North was by no means unanimous in its loyalty, the West and South were scarcely more unanimous in their Nationalism. It was true that, in the one, the Union had more friends than enemies, and that, in the others, it had more enemies than friends. But it was also true that, in Ulster, there were multitudes of Parnellites, and that, in Munster and Leinster and Connaught, there were multitudes who were devoted to the Union. We were positively amazed to discover, in the very worst parts of the country, how numerous the law-abiding and the loyal population were. We kept a record of the opinions expressed by every person with whom we had the opportunity of conversing in the course of our third journey. In Wicklow, in Dublin, and right across Ireland as far as Kilrush, we found that more than half

the people we asked were Unionsts. I readily admit that, among the poorer peasants of Kerry and Connemara and Donegal, the great majority avowed their allegiance to Mr. Parnell ; but the more we questioned them the more we were convinced that for Home Rule as a principle they did not care a fig ; and that, if they supported those who supported an Irish Parliament, it was simply and solely because they were led to believe that it would give them the land for next to nothing, and would make the wildest wastes in Ireland busy with the roar of engines and the whir of wheels. And it was news to us to learn that, in Tralee, in the very centre of the most lawless region in the realm, there were 1500 members of the Primrose League ; and that, in the Rebel City itself, its adherents numbered over 5000. How many thousands of Conservatives who were not Leaguers, and of Liberals who were not Home Rulers, were to be found in these particular districts, and throughout the length and breadth of the country, it would be impossible to say. Mr. Bright invariably estimated the Loyalists at two millions, and my own conviction is that they would not fall far short of this. But they were scattered and disorganized and discouraged ; in most localities

they lacked the courage to fight for their opinions ; and in some they were so conscious of their numerical weakness that they were afraid to acknowledge their views in any way whatever in face of the social ostracism and personal outrage which they had only too much reason to fear if those views were suspected.

And this immense minority was by no means confined to the Protestants of Ireland. Whilst practically all of these were included, it likewise included many of the Irish Catholics. Ashamed of the flagrant violations of every law divine and human which lay at the door of the party of disloyalty, conscious of the censure of the Holy Pontiff, dreading the revolutionary schemes towards which the agitation tended, scandalized by its reckless attacks upon every right of property and every rule of Christian charity, and anxious that all men should be able to live together in peace and quietness, the bulk of the better-class Catholics, and many of the poorer ones—more by far than had the courage to admit it openly—were on the side of law and order ; whilst * Protestants, and Presbyterians, and Wesleyans, and Baptists, and Congregationalists, and Quakers

* The General Synod of the Church of Ireland, representing 600,000 of the population, passed a unanimous resolution in favour of the

were Unionists almost to a man. The Protestant Home Rule Association, so far as we were able to ascertain, was a palpable farce, devised to gull the British elector.

But the true dividing line was to be found in the social condition of the people. *The landlords and the manufacturers; the lawyers, the doctors, and the professional classes generally; the larger shopkeepers, the better-class farmers, the peasant proprietors, the prosperous artizans of the

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maintenance of the Union; and 864 of the 990 Nonconformist ministers of Ireland signed an address to the Marquess of Salisbury and the Marquess of Hartington protesting against Home Rule; whilst the rest, with few exceptions, were known to be of the same opinion.

* 583 merchants and traders, 41 directors of public companies, 48 members of public boards, 36 Queen's Counsels, 146 barristers and attorneys, 83 physicians and surgeons, 35 Fellows and Professors of Trinity College, 144 Deputy Lieutenants and Justices of the Peace, and many other well-known citizens were on the Reception Committee which made arrangements for the visit of Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen to the Irish capital. It included the President, Vice-President and Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, the Chairmen of the principal railway and steampacket companies, and of the chief suburban townships, the Governor and all the Directors of the Bank of Ireland, the President of the Royal Agricultural Society, the Provost and Vice-Provost of Trinity, the President of the College of Physicians, the Astronomer-Royal, and the President of the Royal Hibernian Academy, and "was representative in the highest degree of the mercantile and and professional classes of the city of Dublin." "Unionists of every religious creed, and of every shade of political thought "were comprised in it, "and its most significant feature was the adhesion of the leading Roman Catholics of the metropolis."

industrial centres of the North—everybody, in fact, who had anything to lose was on the side of the Union. The populations of the slums and the starving occupants of the rude hovels in the country districts were enlisted under the banner of Mr. Parnell. It was the same in North and South alike. In every town we came to we could have pointed out the loyal quarter at a glance.

The fact was that not one in ten who voted for the Irish leader cared twopence for his Irish Parliament What they did care for were creature comforts. They wished to live at ease on rocks which were barren and on soil which they were too lazy to cultivate. Though, in many cases, their rent was only a few shillings per annum ; though it was lowered by successive Acts of Parliament ; though fixity of tenure was guaranteed, and the right of every man to sell his own improvements conceded, and the tenant shielded from oppression by the most liberal land laws in the world, they were not contented. And naturally so.

But they wholly failed to see—thanks to the men who led them — that their misery was inevitable under the circumstances ; that England had not anything whatever to do with it ; that, if

they would persist in clinging to their barren homesteads, which were scarcely rich enough to accommodate a tithe of those who dwelt on them ; if they allowed their fields to be only half-tilled, and the fish at their doorways uncaught, and the streams that ran through their valleys idle, and their mines and quarries unexplored, they must expect to live in penury ; and that no Parliament, either English or Irish, could help them. They said that their rents were still too high. But they would not have been able to live decently if they had been abolished altogether. They said that they wanted the land for themselves. But Mr. Balfour had enabled them to purchase their holdings outright by paying forty-nine instalments each of which was less by twenty per cent. than the amount they were paying annually for the mere privilege of occupation. They declared that he was asking more than they were worth, and that the matter ought to be left to their own control. But he did not ask anything like as much as Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Gladstone,and Earl Spencer, and Mr. Morley had alike declined to trust them with the settlement of this, the chief question in which they were interested. *They deplored the dearth of manufactures and

* Mr. Healy recently remarked, in Parliament, that whisky was

they did their best, by their disquietude, to wreck the few they had; the linen industry of Ulster they anathematized, and, at the mere rumour of a Parliament in Dublin, the shares in almost every Irish company began to fall. They stated that they required protection in order to develop Irish trade. But the right to adopt it was absolutely refused by the framers of the Home Rule Bill. They declared that their rivers were liable to floods; that their harbours were inadequate, and their boats and nets of the poorest quality; that the towns in the West were unconnected with the markets; that railways and tramways ought to be at once commenced; and that some bold scheme was necessary for dealing with the congested districts. The government decided to give their best attention to every legitimate complaint and to endeavour to devise a remedy, and, from the outset, they were met by the Irish representatives with determined and obstructive opposition. And the constituencies were reported to be chafing

"the one commodity their country produced"; and Mr. Wm. O'Brien tells us, in "When We Were Boys," a novel which I have read with a large amount of pleasure, that the only industries left in Ireland are "agitation and the begging-box;" and that "there are only two careers for a young fellow of spirit"—penal servitude or *delirium tremens*.

under a Coercion Act—we did not see much evidence of this—but they forgot that fifty-four Coercion Acts were passed by Grattan's Parliament in eighteen years; and that, in face of the opposition which was threatened by Ulster, it was probable that one of the first proceedings of the Parliament on College Green would be to put the nation under martial law.

Briefly stated, then, the results of our enquiry were these:

That a very powerful minority, including practically all the wealth and enterprise of the country, and estimated by Mr. Bright at not less than 2,000,000, did not desire an Irish Parliament; that the bulk of them were bitterly hostile to it; and that a considerable proportion asserted that they were prepared, if necessary, to resist its authority by force of arms.

That, of the remaining 3,000,000, comparatively few were Home Rulers for sentimental or constitutional reasons, and the vast majority simply supported the idea in the hope that it would result in the establishment of industries, and as a means of obtaining the land at their own price. The priests, of course, espoused it largely with a view to increasing the influence and privileges of their

church—the politicians because it was *an easy way to make a living.

That the benefits the people expected were illusory, protection having been prohibited and the control of the land question denied; and that the aspirations of the priests were equally incapable of realization, as any attempt to restore the ascendency of the Romish church was distinctly forbidden.

That the unavoidable friction between the rival elements of the population would lead to widespread rioting, if not to civil war; that the landlords, having sold their estates upon the terms the government proposed, would leave the island; that the prevailing sense of insecurity would tend to scare away the remaining capital; that the national poverty would at once be aggravated, and the men who had agreed to buy their holdings omit to pay the annual instalments of the purchase money; that wholesale evictions would ensue; and that to the resistance of Ulster would be added the disaffection of the South and West.

That, as the consequence of all this, the last state

* It is said that not less than 42 members of the Irish parliamentary party are paid by the League, and many of the remainder appear to owe their position to the agitation.

of the country would be worse than the first, and, thwarted by the restrictions under which they laboured, the popular leaders would commence a new agitation in favour of destroying "the last link which keeps Ireland bound to England." Neither Mr. Richardson nor myself imagine, for a moment, that the Irish people generally desire separation—in fact, we only met one man in the whole course of our journeyings who declared himself as favourable to it—but we were satisfied that * a demand for separation would be the outcome of the universal discontent.

That, if we were sincere in our determination to be guided solely by the wishes of the majority, we should be compelled to grant it, with the result that our manufactures would be shut out by hostile tariffs, and an independent republic established at our very doors; that, if we refused to do so, the ancient plague of obstruction would revive at Westminster, as it is understood that the retention of at least a portion of the Irish representatives will be insisted upon; that, in Ireland, we should have to repress a rebellion, possibly without the aid

* "We call them Separatists because we know that the measures which they are recommending will certainly *lead to* the separation of Ireland from Great Britain." *The Marquess of Salisbury in Rossendale.*

of local resources, and, it might be, in direct opposition thereto; and that, in all likelihood, the aid of an army would be required to restore the imperial authority. This would be coercion with a vengeance.

That everything that was really necessary might be obtained without Home Rule. The chronic poverty of the congested districts, the tenacity with which the poorer classes cling to the land, "the absence of varied industries," the existence of two hostile factions, the divers defects in the administrative arrangements of the country —these were the real evils from which it was suffering, and all of these evils, we were confident, might easily be redressed.

That the firm, unflinching, impartial, continuous administration of the law was imperative. That, when once the public were convinced that those who broke it—be they priests, or Orangemen, or Leaguers—were doomed to pay the penalty, and that no outcry and no agitation would deter the government from the performance of its duties, they would cease to oppose it; and that the orderly and industrious minority would lift their heads, and make their saving influence felt again.

That, as soon as the reign of law was restored,

confidence would be engendered, and capital take heart again; and that the government might appropriately supplement the change by encouraging the development of Irish resources by grants from the imperial exchequer, a principle undesirable in itself, but justified as a means of making atonement for the selfishness of the policy which crippled Irish trade in former centuries.

That the problem of the congested districts ought to be grappled with without delay; that to urge the inhabitants to hold to the land was a fatal mistake; that, in the absence of mines or mills or fisheries, they would be poor if rent were utterly abolished; that they should be persuaded to migrate to more fertile regions, and, if requisite, to emigrate, in companies, to some English colony; that the size of the holdings should be increased and better modes of cultivation introduced; that railways should be constructed to bring the outlying localities into connection with the large centres of population, the harbours improved, the water power utilized, the hills quarried, the mines opened out, and the cottage industries which have have done so much for Gweedore, and Kenmare, and other places, promoted by the establishment of technical schools.

That, although the Irish land laws were the most liberal in the world, it did not follow that they were perfect; that in various minor details they required amendment; and that it was in every way desirable to terminate the existing system of dual ownership, and make the tenants owners of the soil upon the lowest terms which were practicable.

That a gradual revival of prosperity would ensue, and, as their social condition changed for the better, the people would begin to turn a deaf ear to the agitators who made their living out of them, and dangled dreams before them when they cried for bread; that the old antagonisms would diminish, the old dividing lines be slowly, but surely, obliterated, and even the Orangemen themselves forget their former bitterness, and make common cause with their Catholic countrymen in the pursuit of national prosperity.

That, as soon as this tendency became sufficiently evident, it would be well to extend the application of the principles of local self-government. As the extremists dropped into oblivion and the moderate men of all parties began to be in the ascendant, the dangers which are only too reasonably anticipated from the

régime of the men who execute the unwritten laws of the League would pass away. County government, with adequate safeguards, might be speedily conceded. If this should not suffice, provincial councils might be created ; and, if any functions still remained which were beyond their scope, and yet of purely Irish concern, a central authority might even be established upon a basis equally applicable to all parts of the United Kingdom, and the Imperial Parliament, whilst retaining its complete supremacy, be able to delegate its minor functions to subordinate assemblies , and thus, it might be, pave the way, by slow degrees, for the admission of colonial representatives and the federation of the Empire.

Much has happened since the last of our three journeys, but it has only confirmed us in these views. And the outlook has distinctly brightened. John Bull has had the satisfaction of seeing his Other Island making steady progress, in the teeth of ceaseless agitation, and notwithstanding the fact that the bulk of the Liberal party have thrown in their lot with the lawless, and stooped to the level of the men they failed to raise.

A moderate Crimes Act, resolutely administered, and coupled with a Land Act the "most

"generous which has yet been offered to the tenants of Ireland by any Parliament either Liberal or Conservative," together with the Ashbourne Act, the success of which has been indisputable, has succeeded in effecting a veritable transformation. Pauperism has decreased enormously, insolvencies have sensibly diminished, evictions are becoming comparatively rare, juries are no longer afraid to convict, agrarian outrages are growing rapidly less, and boycotting is now practically extinct. Simultaneously with this, the deposits in the Joint Stock Banks have increased by something like £3,000,000; the Post Office Savings Banks and Trustee Savings Banks show a corresponding elasticity; whilst the gross annual receipts of the railways are more by nearly a quarter of a million pounds, and the shares in almost every commercial undertaking in Ireland have not merely recovered from their depression, but have largely risen in value. Most encouraging of all, Mr. Balfour, the man who had been denounced upon every platform in the country, and depicted as a heartless monster, has gone without an escort to the wildest parts of the West, and been cheered by Irish peasants, and told by Irish priests that he was the greatest benefactor the people ever had.

Surely Unionism is beginning to justify itself, and may look forward with confidence to the conclusion of a programme which has had already such immense results. Indeed, it is a policy the ultimate success of which is certain. But will it have a chance? I have been troubled with the gravest doubts upon the subject. The unstable nature of the electorate, their inability to appreciate the benefits which have accrued to them under the existing administration, their disposition to prefer to be badly governed by Mr. Gladstone rather than to be admirably governed by the Marquess of Salisbury, their readiness to accept an appeal to their emotions rather than the hard logic of facts have disconcerted me The nation appears to have lost its staying-power. And by-election after by-election has pointed unmistakably to the speedy return of Mr. Gladstone to the post which he ought never to be permitted to occupy again. In any case, the Unionist party must not swerve an inch from their ideal, and must labour on to the end to complete their policy. Whether Ireland will be allowed to reap the fruits thereof or no, the wisdom of that policy is manifest, and, as long as may be, we must steadfastly proceed with it.

But, to-day, a new hope has arisen in my breast. In the light of recent history, I had almost feared that there was not any humiliation which the leader of the Liberal party would not undergo in order to gain his purpose. In the sacred interests of the alliance with the men who were marching "through rapine to the disintegration and dismemberment of the Empire," I had seen all lawlessness condoned, all crime extenuated. Boycotting had been defined as the only resource of a downtrodden peasantry, and blackthorns had been invoked against batons, and an impetuous population had been taught to hate the laws of a free Parliament, and a late Chief Secretary had led a Tipperary mob, and the right honourable gentleman who had denounced the individuals whose authoritative doctrine was "the doctrine of treason and assassination" and declared himself as "at issue with them to the last extremity," was one of their most ardent allies, and the various other satellites of Mr. Gladstone had united with the 86 who were turning "the Mother of Parliaments" into a bear-garden, and had sunk so low that I never doubted that they would take the one step further, and condone adultery to get to power.

But I have done both him and them an injustice.

The seventh commandment has eaten up his brethren, as Lord Salisbury says. The sixth and eighth and ninth and tenth have all been broken with impunity, and English statesmen dared to palliate the breach; but on the seventh they take their stand. They have made their stand too late. A relentless Nemesis has pursued them. And the man whose pledges were to have been accepted without question, to whom the freedom of the city of Edinburgh was given, who was asked repeatedly to go to Hawarden, and whose character compared so favourably with that of Mr. Pigott, has betrayed the wife of his friend and the confidence of his host, and has deliberately deceived the man who was working night and day to vindicate his reputation. And, not content with this, he has trampled on the wishes of his followers, and flung the "union of hearts" in the face of the venerable statesman who had wrecked his reputation to attain it.

The ill-omened alliance between Liberalism and Nationalism was foredoomed to failure. It did not rest upon any solid basis. It was only by the sacrifice of conviction that it became possible for a moment. And everything that the Unionists predicted has taken place. The undertaking to accept the Premier's proposals as a permanent

settlement was not worth the breath that gave it utterance. The reiterated declaration of Mr. Gladstone that the two parties were in substantial agreement as to the terms of any future Bill has been belied. The only scheme he is prepared to offer both sections of his quondam friends refuse. At logger-heads with their allies, and at hopeless variance among themselves, the enemy are thrown into complete confusion on the eve of victory. And the stars, which in their courses, fought against Sisera have ranged their shining legions on the nobler side.

And its forces were never more united than now. Banded together by a mighty principle, preferring Ireland's welfare to a paltry triumph at the poll. the solid phalanx which has guarded our dominions from that danger scarcely less disastrous in its ultimate results than pestilence and famine which the Earl of Beaconsfield foresaw is ready to resist it to the last. And the way is absolutely plain. Walking in the path of justice "we cannot err. Guided by that light —that divine light—we are safe Every step we make upon our road is a step that brings us nearer to the goal; and every obstacle, even although it seems, for the moment, insurmountable, can only for a little while retard, and never can defeat, the final triumph."

And peradventure some of the deserters may rally round the timeworn banner once again. It may be that Mr. Gladstone, who has been so terribly betrayed, will learn the lesson, and return to the path in which he told us, once, to walk. It may be that the warning of the buried Earl will yet be heeded; and that Liberalism, chastened by adversity, will seek to purge away its shame by joining hands with those whose purpose is, whilst loving Ireland, to be true to England too. But, with or without its help, the battle must proceed. Divided and disorganized, the enemy are impotent. Their extremity is our opportunity. Our aim is clear, it is honest, it is logical; let us steadily fulfil it. Let us turn neither to the right hand nor to the left until the end is gained.

The maintenance of law, the faith in union, and the gradual development of liberty—these are the foundations of the policy in which we put our trust. Upon this rock we build, and, as the stately fabric rises, crime will cease, and poverty, like some black phantom, disappear. The war of creeds will lose its bitterness, and the strife of classes vanish with the wretchedness which gave it birth. There will be only one party in Ireland, and their work will be to add

to the lustre of its ancient fame by the glory of its present achievements; and to promote, in every corner of its four fair provinces, the peace which yet shall crown its hills as with a halo, and adorn its farthest valleys with the dwellings of the free. And the nations which its warriors helped to win for us its statesmen shall assist us to retain, and, in the task of rearing a United Empire, every citizen of the United Kingdom share. I gaze upon the land as in a dream, and, as I gaze,

> "The tumult of the time disconsolate
> To inarticulate murmurs dies away."

John Bull has made amends. And he has been forgiven. And in all his family of realms there is not one that nestles to his heart more closely than his Other Island.

THE END.

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John Bull and His Other Island.

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